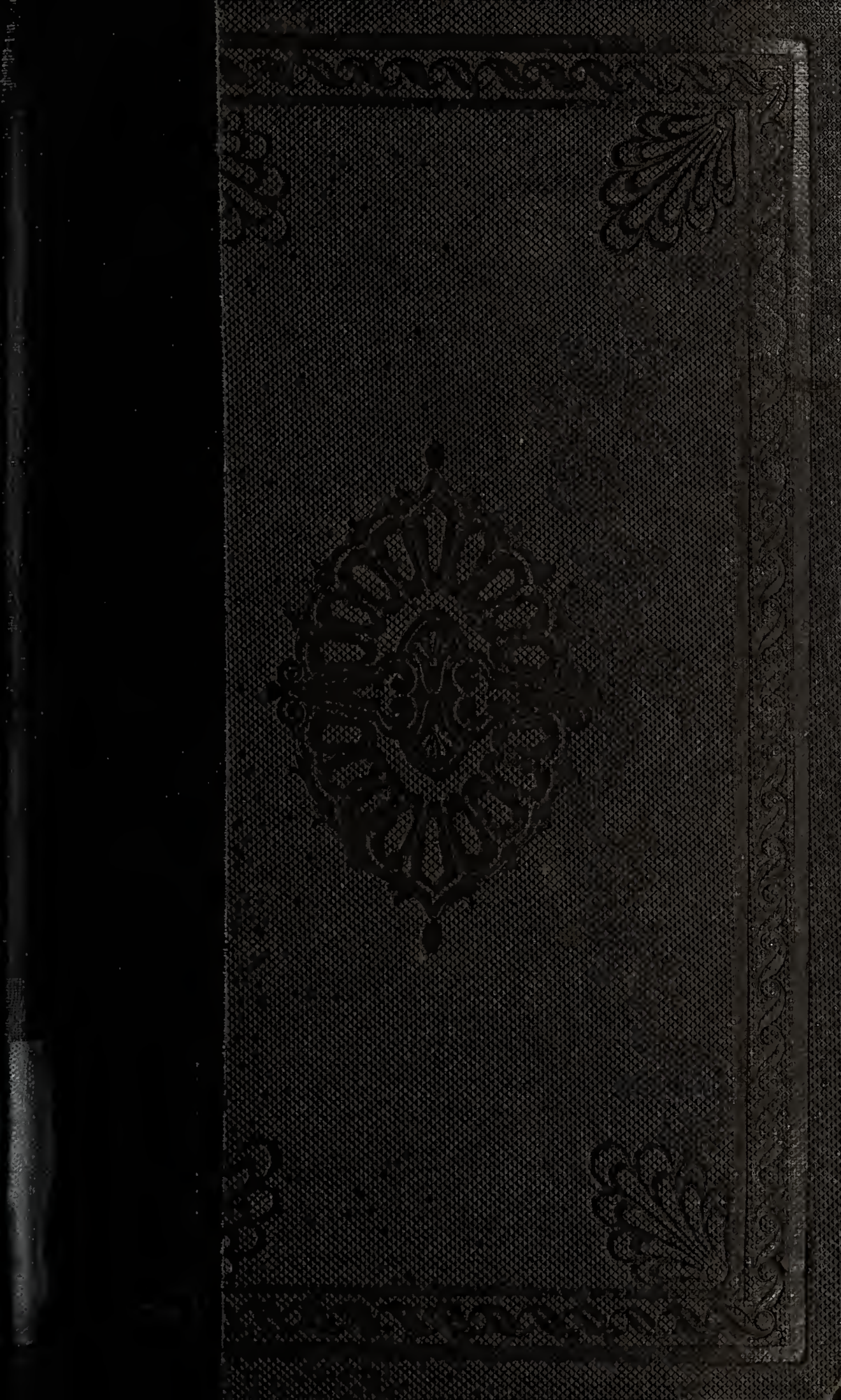




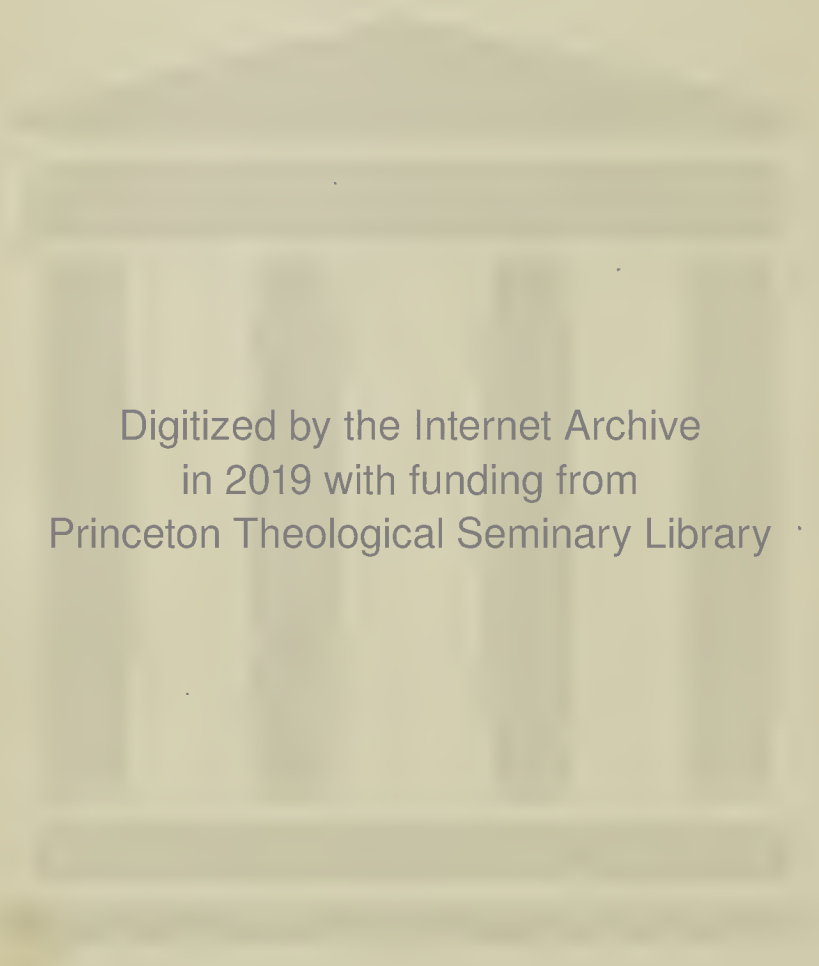
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THE
CHRISTIAN'S DAILY PORTION,
OR
GOLDEN POT OF MANNA:

CONTAINING
THREE HUNDRED AND SIXTY FIVE
EXERCISES
ON THE PERSON, OFFICES, WORKS, AND GLORY
OF THE REDEEMER,

BY J. ✓ BURNS,

MINISTER OF ÆNON CHAPEL, ST. MARYLEBONE,

Author of "Youthful Piety," &c., &c.

Wherein was the Golden Pot that had Manna.---*Heb.* ix. 4.
Christ is all and in all.---*Col.* iii. 11.

FOURTH EDITION,
REVISED AND ENLARGED.

LONDON:
J. H. STARIE, 166, HIGH HOLBORN.
1842.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE title of this work sufficiently indicates the use for which it is intended. Often has the writer been greatly refreshed and edified by works of a similar description; and it occurred to him, that a series of short exercises, on the person and work of Christ, would not fail to be acceptable and useful to the humble and devout believer. The author has endeavored to condense his thoughts as much as possible, so as to leave room for the reader's extended reflections. And he thinks it scarcely possible for the mind to dwell on some subject directly connected with Christ, every day in the year, without an increase of faith and love being the happy result. If the work should tend in any degree to exalt and magnify the Saviour, and lead his disciples to a more extended knowledge of his unrivalled glories, and to a more experimental acquaintance with his unspeakable benefits, the author will consider the end contemplated in its publication amply realised.

3, *St. John's Wood Grove,*
June 12th, 1837.

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THE GOLDEN POT OF MANNA, &c.

January 1.

CHRIST THE ALPHA.

I am Alpha, (i. e. The Beginning.)—*Rev. i. 8.*

How important to have right views of the blessed Redeemer. How desirable to understand his true character, so that our souls may be captivated with his glories, and that all our affections and desires may centre in him. The holy scriptures are admirably adapted to effect this. There he is exhibited in all his dignity, loveliness, and beauty. Of the system of revelation, he is the great centre, the glorious orb of light, and life, and glory. He says, "I am Alpha." As that letter is the first of the Greek Alphabet, so he is the first letter in the Alphabet of all true and saving knowledge. Christ is the Alpha of all the DIVINE PURPOSES and COUNSELS, respecting our world's salvation. The eternal design or purpose of God, to redeem the world, "was made *in* Christ." (Eph. iii. 11. See also Eph. i. 4., 2 Tim. i. 9.) Jesus is the Alpha of all the rich and precious promises. The first announcement of divine clemency referred to the Messiah, as the woman's glorious conquering seed. (Gen. iii. 15.) And all succeeding promises were made in

and through him. "All the promises of God *in him.*" (2 Cor. i. 20.) He is the Alpha of all the blessings and privileges of salvation. Before a ray of hope could visit our world, Christ must be prospectively given by the Father. All mercy rests on him as its only foundation. He redeemed man from going down to the pit. He satisfied all the honourable claims of the divine law. He shed his blood as a true sacrifice for guilt. He overcame all the adversaries of himself and the human family; conquered death, opened a passage through the tomb, and has exalted human nature, by placing it on the right hand of the Majesty on high. Hence we have pardon, gracious acceptance, adoption, peace, entire sanctification, and eternal life in his name. Ought not Christ to be the Preacher's Alpha; the first in every sermon, the leading theme in every discourse? The Worshippers' Alpha: the first object in praise, meditation, and prayer? The Christian's daily Alpha; our first thoughts should ascend to him. He should possess our first affections, and always be to us the chiefest of ten thousand, yea the altogether lovely. Let Christ's glory always be first sought, and his favour be the constant subject of our solicitude and desires.

"I am the first, and I the last,
Time centres all in me;
The mighty God, who was and is,
And shall for ever be."

Jan. 2.

GODHEAD OF JESUS.

Who is over all, God blessed for ever, Amen.--Rom. ix. 5.

A MORE sublime sentence, the Word of God does not contain. And as it is obviously applied to the Redeemer, his supreme Godhead is clearly established. To apply these words to any creature, however glorious and exalted, would be blasphemy itself. It is impossible to account for that darkness which pervades the minds of many on this great momentous subject. What idea of divinity is not here exhibited? "Who is God." Yea he thought it not robbery to be equal with God. The Father speaking to him, says, "Thy throne O God," (Heb. i. 8.) "God over all;" not a subordinate Deity, not a mere delegated God, but over all, over all creatures on earth; over all Angels, principalities, and thrones in heaven. Over all, so that there is none over him. He is the "Most High." (compare Ps. lxxviii. 17. 1 Cor. x. 9.) He is God over all "for evermore." He is the immutable Jehovah, and changes not, from everlasting to everlasting, God. The same yesterday, to day, and for ever. (Heb. xiii. 8.) He is over all, God "blessed" for evermore. He is infinitely happy and blessed in himself. Fountain of his own felicity. He has light and life in himself. And he is the object of everlasting blessedness. All the hosts of heaven bless him; all the glorified saints bless him. And

the completed family of heaven, will render to him “power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing, for ever and ever.” (Rev. v. 13.) How great are the Saviour’s claims. He claims our reverence—our adoration—our trust—our supreme love—our highest praises—our entire selves. How solid is the foundation of the Church. It rests upon the power of the unchanging Rock of Ages. How futile the attacks of foes; the gates of hell can never prevail against it. How secure the basis of the believing sinner’s hope. The Lord is our Redeemer; Jehovah of hosts is his name. How fearful an adversary, to the ungodly and impenitent sinner. The greatest horror that will seize the ungodly in the great day, will arise from the display of the wrath of the Lamb.

“Brightness of th’ eternal glory,
Image of our God exprest,
Jesus, let thy works adore thee,
God supreme, for ever blest.”

Jan. 3.

OMNIPOTENCE OF CHRIST.

The Almighty.—Rev. i. 8.

It is very manifest from the Divine Word, that Omnipotence, or Almighty power, is attributed to Christ. The Evangelical prophet styles him, the „Mighty God.” (Is. ix. 6.) The Apostle states,

that he is "able to subdue all things unto himself." (Phil. iii. 21.) All power is invested in his hands. (Matt. xxviii. 18.) He upholdeth all things, (even) by the *word* of his power. (Heb. i. 3.) Hence the Apostle, unable to find language adequate to the subject, refers us to "the exceeding greatness of his power." (Eph. i. 19. Read also Rev. xi. 17. Is. xlix. 26.) Christ's Almighty power was displayed in Creation, when by his Omnific fiat, he spake the world into being. (Col. i. 16.) It is displayed in the natural preservation and moral government of all things; "for by him all things consist." (Col. i. 17.) It is displayed in the unrivalled achievements of redemption; for

"It was great to speak a world from nought,
But greater to redeem."

It was displayed in the great and sublime miracles he wrought, when by his all powerful command, lepers were healed, demons were expelled, and the dead were raised. It was displayed in his own glorious resurrection; whereby he spoiled death, and showed that he had power to lay down his life, and power to take it up again. It will be again displayed with inconceivable magnificence and glory, when he shall raise the sleeping dust of the myriads of mankind, in the resurrection of the last day. What a stronghold is Christ in the day of trouble! With what confidence may we rest on this founda-

tion. As the Almighty Saviour, he is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him.

Jan. 4.

THE OMNISCIENCE OF CHRIST.

In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.—Col. iii. 4.

OF whom speaks the Apostle? It will be seen by referring to the preceding verse that he is speaking of Christ. That in Christ, wisdom and knowledge are deposited. More wisdom and knowledge than dwells in the highest angel that worships before the throne. Even “all the treasures” of wisdom and knowledge are in Christ. As the waters are in the channels of the mighty deep, and as the sun is the great source of light, so all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are in Christ. Whatever knowledge or wisdom angels or men possess, it flows from this ocean, it is communicated from this sun. If all wisdom and knowledge are in Christ, it is obvious that there cannot be a ray of light in any creature but what has emanated from him. Hence he said “I am the light of the world.” (John viii. 12.) The apostle says, that he is both the “POWER and the WISDOM of God.” (Cor. i. 24.) The heavenly host also ascribe “wisdom” unto the Lamb that was slain. (Rev. v. 12.) Peter appealed to him and said “Lord thou knowest all things” (John xxi. 17.) On several occasions

he detected the hypocrisy of the pharisees, because he knew their thoughts, “for he needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man.” (John ii. 25.) When he wanted tribute money, he knew what fish would yield it,—when he wanted to make his entry into Jerusalem, he knew where the colt was to be found,—when he desired to eat the passover, he knew what person would grant him his guest chamber,—he knew who would betray him,—he knew how Peter would deny him, and the other disciples forsake him and flee. In short, “in him were hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” Without Omniscience, he could not rule the world, or govern his Church; without this, he could not judge all hearts at the last day. How consoling to the disciple in temptation, distress or when under calumny or reproach, that Christ knoweth how to succour his people, and will vindicate all his followers at the last day.

Jan. 5.

OMNIPRESENCE OF CHRIST.

And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man who is in heaven.—John iii. 13.

IN this striking passage both the immensity and omnipresence of Christ are declared. He affirms that notwithstanding he was known upon the earth, and conversing with one of its inhabi-

tants, yet he was at the very same instant in heaven. Jesus as the divine Lord, fills heaven and earth with his presence and glory. He is "all and *in* all." (Col. iii. 11.) "He *fillet*h all in all." (Ep. i. 23.) He is "Lord *over* all." (Rom. x. 12.) It is said also that he hath ascended, "that he might fill *all things*." (Ep. iv. 10.) It is impossible for language to express more fully the immensity and omnipresence of Christ. When he sent forth his disciples to preach the gospel to every creature, he pledged himself to be "with them always, even unto the end of the world." (Mat. xxviii. 20.) However opposite their spheres of labours, however separated over the surface of the earth, however distant from each other, Christ engaged to be with each of them and all of them, and *always*, even unto the end of the world. In reference also to his worshipping people, he has promised "wherever two or three are met together in his name, to be in the midst of them." (Mat. xviii. 20.) What a cheering and blessed doctrine is this, to the friends of Christ! At home or abroad, by day or night, in health, or sickness, among friends or enemies, living or dying, they have the presence of Christ! What a powerful stimulus to ministerial courage and hope! Christ is with them, to qualify, to direct, and to succeed all their labours. Should it not also incite us to cultivate all the graces of the spirit and always to act and think, and *speak*, as in Christ's holy and observing presence.

Jan. 6.

THE ETERNAL IMMUTABILITY OF CHRIST.

*Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to day, and for ever.—
Heb. xiii. 8.*

THE terms yesterday, to day, and for ever, obviously comprehend all duration, past, present, and future. And when it is stated that Christ is the same in reference to these, then his eternal immutability is clearly established. What created spirit could lay the least possible claim to these words without arrogating, what justly and essentially belongs to the supreme and blessed God? But Christ himself stated to the Jews “before Abraham was, I am” (John viii. 58.) Here the very terms involving self-existence and unchangeableness are adopted by Christ in reference to himself. Admitting the doctrine of Christ’s deity, we see no difficulty in these passages. But denying that doctrine the subject is involved in complete mystery. We feel persuaded then with Peter, whatever diversity of opinion may exist “that he is the Son of the most high God,” and possesses every attribute and glory of the Father, and as such that “he is the same yesterday,” &c. He is so in the glorious constitution of his person,—in his illustrious attributes and perfections,—in the intensity and affection of his regards,—in the objects of his approbation and delight.—His mind varies not,—his

heart undergoes no change,—his plans and designs are never altered or frustrated,—he is ever of one mind, “the same yesterday, to day, and for ever.” As such he is ever ready to hear and bless his people. Ever the same to succour, support, and save. Our interests will never be neglected. Our confidence can never be misplaced. Our hopes can never be cut off. The believing soul can never be lost.

“I know that safe with him remains,
Protected by his power,
What I’ve committed to his trust;
’Till the decisive hour.”

Jan. 7.

GOD’S NAME IN CHRIST.

For my name is in him.—Exod. xxiii. 21.

It is quite clear that the Angel spoken of in this passage was none other than the blessed Son of God. We do not see how the language would at all apply to any inferior intelligence. To Jesus the passage obviously belongs. God’s name in all its glory and divinity, God’s essential name, Jehovah, is repeatedly applied to Christ. (compare Exod. xvii. 7. with 1 Cor. x. 9.) Isaiah beheld “Jehovah of hosts.” (Isa. vi. 5.) which, from John xii. 39, was none other than the Redeemer. So again, he cries out “prepare ye the way of the Lord, make

straight in the desert, a highway for our God." (Is. xl. 3, 9, 10. also Luke iii. 4.) Jeremiah also predicting Messiah's advent and reign, says "And this is the name whereby he shall be called, the LORD our Righteousness." (Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. see also xxxiii. 15. 16.) The glorious and divine name of God is also in Christ. The Father addressing his Son, says "thy throne O God is for ever and ever!" (Ps. xlv. 6. Heb. i. 8.) So also by the mouth of Isaiah he says "Look unto me, and be ye saved all the ends of the earth; for I am GOD, and there is none else." (Is. xlv. 22.) "Indeed he is called the living and true God" (1 John v. 20.) "The great and mighty God" (Is. ix. 6. Tit. ii. 13.) "The only wise God" (Jude iv. 25.) "The God of glory." (Acts vii. 2.) "God over all, blessed for ever." (Rom. ix. 5.) It is quite clear, that in the holy scriptures the most illustrious names of God are in Christ. And that it is expected we should honour the Son, even as we honour the Father. He is not to have an inferior place in our estimation and confidence, and love; but we are to esteem, trust, and supremely to love Christ, as our Lord and our God. What glory does his divinity shed around the redeeming plan! What solid ground of hope, it places before the anxious enquiring sinner, and what motives of joy and triumph does it furnish to all his believing people.

Jan. 8.

CHRIST THE CREATOR OF WORLDS.

For by Him were all things created.—Col. i. 16.

CREATION in all the wisdom, power, and goodness involved in it, belongs to Christ. The worlds were made by the Son of God. All things, from the most minute to the most sublime, were made by him, and without him, was not any thing made that was made. Not only did he chase away the chaotic gloom from this our world, and cause light, life, and harmony to be manifest; but the higher worlds, with all their illustrious orders of inhabitants, “whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by him and for him.” It was Christ’s almighty voice that brought into being the Sun with all the lights of the Solar System. By his voice the channels of the sea were formed, and the waters of the ocean were gathered together. His hand stretched out the heavens as a curtain, and his voice gave to universal nature, her fixed primary laws. Christ’s creating energy extends to all creatures and all worlds. Wherever there is matter, animate, or inanimate, wherever there is mind, distinct from, or united to material form; existence in all its unnumbered varied forms, is the production of Christ. “One Almighty energetic Being produced all things, and that Being, was Christ, (Heb. i. 2.

Ep. iii. 9. John i. 1.) How glorious is the Lord Jesus in his works. Infinitely happy in himself, yet moved by his own unbounded goodness, he employed his illustrious perfections in forming creatures to reflect his image, and to participate of his exhaustless felicity. Hence every creating act made way, for the outgoings of his bounty, and the communications of his love.

“ The word, the uncreated son,
When finite things began to be
Existing, God with God alone,
Thou wast from all eternity !
There in thy Father's bosom laid,
Ineffably, the joy of him,
Thou wast before the worlds were made,
God, independent and supreme.”

Jan. 9.

CHRIST THE UNIVERSAL RULER.

Lord of Lords, and King of Kings.—Rev. xvii. 14.

As there was one First Great Cause of all things, so there is also one Universal Ruler, who directeth and preserveth all things. This universal dominion belongs to Christ :—he reigns over all ;—he is possessed of boundless authority—not only are all things on earth subject to his controul, but all things in heaven ;—his reign extends over all worlds

—“He is Lord of Lords, and King of Kings”
—“By him all things consist” and “He upholdeth all things by the Word of his power.” It is evident from these passages that all dominion and authority, and glory are invested in Christ. Here then we perceive, that all his divine perfections will be in requisition to effect his purposes and to execute his plans. What a word of power is that, on which all things hang! By his word the whole of the orders of the heavenly hierarchy are ruled, directed, and preserved. By the same word an infinitude of worlds are rolled onward in the immensity of space, without collision, jarring, or confusion. All the higher order of intelligences, who have their assigned dominions, are subordinate to Christ; his throne is infinitely higher than theirs, and before him cherubim and seraphim prostrate themselves, “And crown him Lord of all.” All the inhabitants of the earth are in like manner at his disposal. Empires rise or fall at his pleasure. By him kings are deposed, and beggars exalted to sit with the princes of his people. He maketh the wrath of man to praise him, or he restrains it at his pleasure. Hell in all its gloomy extent, and Devils, notwithstanding all their power and malignity, tremble before him. He limits the sphere of their influence. He stays their hellish fury and violence, and he will finally bind their Prince and consign him through endless ages to that dark abyss originally prepared for him and his Angels. How desirable to be interes-

ted in the favor of this glorious Ruler! Who would not fear him? Trust in him! Why should his people despond? Why be anxious and fearful about Zion's ultimate triumph? Never let it be forgotten that the Saviour of the world, and the head of the church, has written upon his vesture and upon his thigh, "King of Kings and Lord of Lords."

Jan. 10.

CHRIST'S PROPER HUMANITY.

Made of a Woman.—Gal. iv. 4.

IN contemplating the Divine perfections attributed to Jesus, we feel that we are in the presence of proper and essential Deity, and exclaim, "This is the true God and Eternal Life." But as the Saviour of the world, we are called likewise to contemplate his inferior nature; for the Godhead no man hath seen or can see. Jesus was seen and heard, so that it is manifest, that the Divinity was enshrined in that which men could behold. It has been conjectured by many, that Angels are clad in some refined aerial, material vehicles, that they possess a sort of spiritual body. Be this as it may, we know that the Son of God tabernacled among us, and that tabernacle was formed of human flesh. While he was therefore truly and properly God with God, he was as truly and properly, man with man. In the language of the Apostle, "He was made of a

Woman." Mary the espoused wife of Joseph, was his mother. She was the highly favoured of the Lord; the chosen vessel to conceive and bring forth the Saviour of the world. He was really and truly fashioned of her flesh; he had all the constituent parts of humanity, with all its weaknesses and infirmities, yet without sin. Though made of a woman, yet that woman was a virgin, and the conception was produced by the mysterious overshadowing of the Holy Ghost. (Luke i. 35.) As man, Christ was possessed of a reasonable soul. He possessed all the qualities, mental and moral, which belong to human nature; so that he was made "in all things like unto his brethren." (Heb. ii. 17.) Who can adequately conceive of the condescension of Christ, in thus assuming the nature of man? Had he veil'd himself in a seraph's form, it would have been an act of amazing condescension; but he stooped lower than this, he became the brother of man, man who had lost the divine image, and thrown off his authority; yet he assimilated himself to this creature's likeness, and was found in fashion as a man. Angels have attempted to fathom this profound mystery, but are not able. How has God exalted our species in this astounding act! Here we are raised above angels, for Christ took not upon him their nature, but ours. In this assumption of human nature, Christ became the kinsman of every child of man. Adam's varied family, in all its lengths and breadths, are united in one brotherhood with the Incarnate

Son of God. The subject loudly demands our highest wonder, love, and praise ; and should induce us to seek after a complete conformity to his likeness, who, though God over all, yet for our wellbeing and salvation, was “made of a woman.”

Jan. 11.

SINLESSNESS OF CHRIST.

Without Sin.—Heb. iv. 15.

As it behoved Christ to assume human nature, and become our kinsman, that he might redeem us, so it was essential that the Mediator between God and man, should be immaculate, “without sin.” By the miraculous conception of Christ, his nature was formed entirely free from every stain that defiles the human family. That nature which was born of the virgin, is emphatically styled, “that holy thing.” It was produced by the mysterious power of the Spirit of God, from whom frailty or imperfection could not possibly proceed. Hence while Jesus our blessed Lord assumed human flesh, yet he was holy, harmless, and separate from sinners. Had he been in the least polluted with sin, he could not have stood forth, as the Mediator between God and man. A sacrifice for his own guilt would have been requisite, before he could have had any fellowship with the Father. Besides, the thought cannot be enter-

tained for a moment, that the Immaculate Deity, would enshrine himself in a tabernacle, defiled by that which he abominably hates. The human nature of Christ, was free from all taint and imperfection. The Apostle reminds us, that he offered himself without spot to God. (Heb. ix. 14.) And he is also set forth as a Lamb, without blemish, and without spot. (1 Pet. i. 19.) God therefore could behold his son, with perfect approbation and delight. In him he beheld the perfect image of his own holiness, and therefore when he was baptised in Jordan, he proclaimed him his beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased. As God's only begotten, well-beloved Son, "he was the brightness of the Father's glory, and express image of his person." (Heb. i. 3.) In the Redeemer's human nature, we see man in all his moral lustre and beauty. Ought we not to feel ourselves attracted by it, and should we not aspire after a close assimilation to that likeness. The Apostle informs us, how the transformation is to be effected. "But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Cor. iii. 18.)

Jan. 12.

PROPHETIC TESTIMONIES CONCERN- ING CHRIST.

To him gave all the prophets witness.—Acts x. 43.

AMIDST all the diversified topics of ancient prophecies, there is one person who has ever a prominent place; there is one subject interwoven with the whole. That person is Christ Jesus; that subject is the work of human redemption. A general reference to the writings of the prophets, will at once justify Peter's declaration, that "to him gave all the prophets witness." In the first books of the Old Testament scriptures, written by Moses, there are several illustrious predictions of Jesus. He is predicted as the WOMAN'S SEED. (Gen. iii. 15.) He was to be of the posterity of Abraham and Isaac. Of the tribe of Judah. The SHILOH, unto whom should be the gathering of the people. (Gen. xlix. 10.) He is also the subject of one of Balaam's prophecies; as the STAR of JACOB, and SCEPTRE of ISRAEL. (Numb. xxiv. 17.) Moses refers the Children of Israel to him, as a "PROPHET," like unto himself, raised up from among their brethren, unto whom in all things, they should hearken. (Deut. xviii. 18. Acts iii. 22.) Job expresses his lively confidence in him, as his "Living Redeemer," who should stand in the latter days upon the earth. (Job. xix. 26, 27.) The Psalmist in his prophetic songs, cel-

ebrates him as the "Governor of all the earth." (Ps. viii. 1.) As the ROYAL BRIDEGROOM. (xlv. 1.) As KING OF ZION. (cx. 1, 2.) As the MIGHTY ONE, on whom help is laid. (lxxxix. 19.) As the PRIEST, after the order of MELCHIZEDECK. (cx. 4.) As the REJECTED OF THE BUILDERS, yet the HEAD STONE OF THE CORNER. (cxviii. 22.) As the ASCENDING MIGHTY CONQUEROR. (lxviii. 17, 19.) As REIGNING and CLOTHING his enemies with shame. (cxxxii. 18.) Such are some of the beautiful and striking representations of Messiah, as contained in the book of Psalms; and the sweet singer's last words referred to him, as "the God and Rock of Israel." (2 Sam. xxiii. 3.) And his last prayer was, "that the whole earth might be filled with his glory." (Ps. lxxii. 19.) How rich, how dignified are these predictions of the blessed Saviour. How directly calculated to procure our confidence in him, and our attachment to him. Here is ample range for delightful contemplation, and surely, our meditations of him, will be superlatively sweet.

Jan. 13.

PART II.

PROPHETIC TESTIMONIES CONCERNING CHRIST.

To him gave all the prophets witness.—Acts x. 43.

WE have already referred to some of the Old Testament predictions of the Saviour. In glancing

at the writings of the other prophets, we shall have the list of glorious appellations, extensively enlarged. Isaiah has been styled, the evangelical prophet, so rich and numerous are his predictions of Jesus and the gospel dispensation. He speaks of Jesus, as the CHILD BORN, yet the MIGHTY GOD, the WONDERFUL COUNSELLOR, the EVERLASTING FATHER, the PRINCE OF PEACE. (ix. 6.) He describes him, as the ROD and STEM of Jesse. (xi. 1, 10.) He exhibits him as the STRENGTH OF THE POOR and NEEDY; a REFUGE from the storm; a SHADOW from the heat. (xxv. 4.) A COVERT from the tempest. He is also exhibited as a KING, who shall reign in righteousness. (xxxii. 1.) As the tender and compassionate SHEPHERD of his people. (xl. 11.) He describes him, as GOD'S ELECT SERVANT, in whom the Father delighteth. (xlii. 1.) The REDEEMER, the HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL. (xlix. 7.) As the LAMB brought to the slaughter. (liii. 7.) As the ANOINTED PREACHER of good tidings. (lxi. 1.) And as the BOZRAH CONQUEROR, mighty to save. (lxiii. 1.) Jeremiah gave repeated prophetic witness to Christ. He describes him as the RIGHTEOUS BRANCH, the PROSPEROUS KING, the LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. (xxiii. 5, 6.) Ezekiel refers to Christ, as the PLANT OF RENOWN. (xxxiv. 29.) As the GLORY of the GOD of Israel. (xliii. 2.) And as DAVID, the Shepherd of God's flock. (xxxiv. 24.) Daniel prophesied of Christ, as the ANCIENT of DAYS. (vii. 9.) The STONE cut out of the mountain, without hands.

(ii. 4, 5.) And as MESSIAH, the PRINCE. (ix. 25.) Hosea refers to him, as DAVID their KING. (iii. 5.) As the DESTRUCTION of the GRAVE, and the Redeemer from death. (xiii. 14.) Joel speaks of him, as the *Lord God* in the midst of Israel, and dwelling in ZION. (ii. 27. iii. 17.) Micah predicted of him, as the RULER in Israel, and as the SHEPHERD, who should stand and feed in the majesty of the name of the Lord our God. (v. 24.) Haggai, as the DESIRE of all NATIONS. (ii. 7.) Zechariah, as the KING of JERUSALEM, and as the FELLOW and SHEPHERD of the Lord of Hosts. (xiii. 7.) And Malachi, the last of the prophets, described him as “the MESSENGER of the Lord of Hosts, and as “the SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, who should arise with healing in his wings.” (iii. 1. and iv. 2.) Thus. “to him gave all the prophets witness.” How truly did Christ say of the Old Testament Scriptures, “they are they which testify of me.”

Jan. 14.

CHRIST, THE WOMAN'S CONQUERING SEED

Shall bruise thy head.—Gen. iii. 15.

THIS passage contains the first intimation of redeeming grace that God ever gave to the world. He was now examining the guilty culprits, and

in passing sentence upon them, in the midst of wrath he remembers mercy. In pronouncing sentence upon the serpent, he states that the seed of the woman shall bruise his head. Now we have heard and seen that Christ was made of a woman. That he was emphatically her seed and there cannot be the least doubt, that he was the person distinctly alluded to in this promise. Besides, the conqueror was to be the seed of the woman only. And thus it became Christ to be the fruit of a virgin's womb. Hence by his miraculous conception, was this striking prediction realized. Then he was to be the adversary and opponent of that wicked one, that old serpent, the devil. It is admitted that Satan was to bruise his heel, that is, he should carry on an opposition to Messiah and his cause, that he should subject him to some pain, but the part affected was to be "his heel," not an essential vital part. This Satan did in the sufferings of the Old Testament church, but more literally in his attacks upon the Saviour himself. In the wilderness, in the garden, and on the cross, he bruised Messiah's heel. But on Christ's part, "the head," that is the authority and the power, the very vital part of the serpent, was to be bruised. Christ's incarnation was for this end, that "he might destroy the works of the Devil." By the power of his truth, he caused Satan's kingdom to fall as lightning from heaven. By his death on the cross, he spoiled principalities and powers,

and made a show of them openly. And by his spiritual rule he will effectually undermine the throne and empire of Satan, and will finally bind him down with a great chain and cast him into the bottomless pit. The work is now going on which will effect this glorious consummation. Christ's triumph is pledged, and is absolutely certain. Let all the friends of Jesus rejoice that their great enemy is doomed to certain overthrow and ruin. And that what has in part been effected, is a sure prelude to the complete realization of this first delightful promise.

Jan. 15.

CHRIST THE SHILOH.

Until Shiloh come.— Gen. xlix. 10.

THE term Shiloh according to our best commentator signifies either "the Sent," or the "Peace Maker." In either case it is exceedingly appropriate when applied to Jesus, and there can be no doubt that he is distinctly alluded to in this prediction. At the very time of Christ's appearing, Judea was subject to the controul of a Roman governor, and their political power was so far gone, that they confessed that it was not lawful for them to put any man to death. (John xviii. 31.) Since that period the Jews have lost every vestige of power and authority, and are in a state of degraded vassalage

almost to every kingdom under heaven. This prophecy must therefore have been falsified, or the Shiloh must have appeared. It is deserving of especial notice that in the appearing of the blessed Jesus, the whole body of ancient prediction, as to the person, birthplace, miracles, sufferings, kingdom, &c. of the predicted Shiloh were most minutely fulfilled. The life of Jesus was one great mass of evidence that he was the "Shiloh," the "Sent of God." One of the rulers confessed, that no man could have done the works he did, had not God been with him. Christ as the Shiloh was *sent* by the Father as his chosen elect messenger and servant. He was *sent* from heaven, the place of his original riches, authority and glory. He was *sent* into this, our world of wretchedness, sin, and woe, to be one of its inhabitants, and to mingle with its society. He was *sent* to illumine it by his doctrines, to redeem it by his death, and to restore its dignity and holiness, by the erection of his spiritual kingdom. He was *sent* to make it the field of conflict in which he should overcome the powers of darkness, and he was *sent* to make it the theatre of his wonders, and to unite it by his mediatorial influence in one spiritual society to the hierarchy of heaven. What love did the Father evince in sending his Son! What grace did the Son display, in freely coming into our world to save sinners! And under what deep and lasting obligations are its inhabitants to hail his appearance with joy, and to

receive him with the greatest possible gratitude and love. To despise the Shiloh, is to treat the whole Godhead with iniquitous contempt, and to expose our souls to his most severe and aggravated displeasure.

Jan. 16.

CHRIST THE GATHERER OF HIS PEOPLE.

Unto him shall the gathering of his people be.—

Gen. xlix. 10.

CHRIST, as the Shiloh, or “the sent,” has a specific work assigned him, in this interesting and ancient prophecy. He is to collect the people to himself. Sin separated man from God, and men from each other. It is the very nature of sin, to divide and scatter. Christ came to redeem men, from all its consequences. Hence his work, includes the gathering of wandering lost souls to God, and their union through himself, as the Mediator, to the Father. Men, like sheep, had left the divine pastures; Christ came as the good Shepherd, to seek them on the black mountains, and to bring them to the fold of his church. Men had revolted from God, and in rebellious hostility had united with the Prince of darkness. Christ, as the Captain of salvation, came to collect them to him-

self, that he might conduct them in one spiritual army to eternal glory. Men had lost their way, and were perishing in darkness and unbelief, and were going down to the bottomless pit; Christ came to shed light around them. He is the "light of the world;" and he also came to bring them from darkness to light, and to guide their feet in the way of peace. In this gathering, he first came to his own people, but afterwards, his gospel was sent into all the world. As the Shiloh, souls are gathered to him in the day of conversion. He receives their souls to himself, when they die. And in the day of his millennial glory, he will gather all his ancient people together, with the whole company of his saints, and he will reign gloriously in the midst of them, in Jerusalem. And finally, he will gather all the redeemed family to himself, in the realms of glory, and wipe away all their tears, and be their God for ever and ever. Reader, ask thyself; has Christ brought thy soul into a state of saving union with him? if he has, rejoice; if not,

"Fly sinners, fly into those arms,
Of everlasting love."

Jan. 17.

CHRIST THE SECOND ADAM.

Who is the figure of him that was to come.—Rom. v. 14.

THE first Adam, was a figure or type of Christ, who is the second Adam, the Lord from heaven. The typical features of resemblance, are striking and numerous. The first Adam came direct from the hands of God, and possessed his likeness and image. Jesus was also immediately formed of the Holy Ghost, and was the perfect image of the blessed God. The first Adam had no human Father, neither had the second. The first Adam was placed as the head, and representative of the human family; the second was given to be head over all things to his church. The first Adam had his wife taken from his side, and thus she was truly a part of his own flesh. Christ took the very nature of the children of men, and by the opening of his side, from whence flowed blood and water, he redeemed the church to himself. The first Adam was made on the sixth day; the second became incarnate in the sixth age, or dispensation of the world. The first Adam was endowed with amazing wisdom and knowledge; the second possessed all the treasures of both, and was the wisdom and power of God. The first Adam was heir of the world, and Lord over all the creatures; the second possesses illimitable rule and authority, who is universal Lord of nature, provi-

dence and grace. The first Adam was the source of natural life to mankind; the second, of spiritual and eternal life, to all who believe. In many respects, the disparity between the two, is happily great and important. By the one, sin, misery, and death entered our world; by the other, righteousness, peace, and eternal life. By the one, we became degraded, and subjected to toil; by the other we are exalted, and obtain true rest. By the one we lost Eden and its pleasures, and became mortal, and exposed to hell. By the other we obtain the heavenly paradise, with its unfading joys, a resurrection from the grave, and endless life. How necessary that as we are naturally connected with the first Adam, that we should be incessantly anxious to be graciously united to the second, and thus obtain eternal salvation, by faith in his name.

Jan. 18.

NOAH A TYPE OF CHRIST.

Noah, this same shall comfort us, concerning, our work and toil.—Gen. v. 29.

THE names of God's servants were often of divine origin, and related to the peculiar feature of their minds, or the work to which they were called. Noah was obviously a striking type of the Lord Jesus. His name signifies *rest* or *consolation*. Now Christ is the *true rest*, the spiritual rest, the rest for

the soul, as well as the consolation of Israel. Noah was said to be *perfect* in his generation, and that he *walked* with God. Christ was absolutely perfect, there was no defilement attached to his nature, nor the least defect in his character. He also was never alone, but held unbroken fellowship with the Father. Noah was a preacher of righteousness and he warned the old world of the judgment which was threatened against them; Christ also preached repentance to his people, the Jews, and foretold the calamities which were about to befall them. Noah prepared an ark for the saving of himself and his house; Christ purchased and prepared his church for the salvation of all who would believe. In Noah's ark were creatures of all kinds, clean and unclean, and in Christ's church are both Jews and Gentiles, persons of every country, people, and tongue. As Noah was within the ark, so Christ is in the midst of his church, to bless and keep unto eternal life. As all those within the ark were preserved in safety and became the inhabitants of the new world, so all who are truly in Christ's church shall assuredly be delivered from the wrath to come and become abiding residents of the New Jerusalem. When Noah had left the ark, God gave him the rainbow as a sign of the Covenant between them. Our blessed Redeemer when beheld in a vision by John, from Patmos, was seated on his throne, around which was a *rainbow*, in colour like unto the emerald. (Rev. iv. 3.) Noah however was only

perfect in *his* generation, and after his deliverance was overtaken with temptation. Christ is as a lamb without spot. His nature and person are immaculate. Noah's ark only saved a few persons, and that only from temporal death, Christ's ark will save an unnumbered multitude, and that from eternal misery. O then how should we be interested in his Gospel! How we should flee to him for shelter! How anxious to have a place in his church, and how we should constantly intercede,

“ Hide me O my Saviour hide,
Till the storms of life are past,
Safe unto the haven guide,
O receive my soul at last!”

Jan. 19.

JESUS THE TRUE MELCHISEDEC.

Like unto the Son of God.—Heb. vii. 3.

MELCHISEDEC'S history is briefly presented in a few verses of the fourteenth Chapter of Genesis, where he met Abraham as he was returning from the battle of the Kings, and blessed him as the Priest of the Most High God, and received tithes of all that he had. David when looking to Christ through the medium of prophetic revelation, exclaims, “Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.” The Apostle in this epistle still dwells more largely upon the subject. The typical

points of likeness seem to be these, Melchisedec's descent and decease were not known, so that it is said he was without father or mother, without beginning of days or end of years. This is really true of the Redeemer, as *Divine* he had no mother, no beginning of days, and as *Human*, he had no father, and as *Divine* and *Human*, he will have no end of years, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to day, and for ever." Melchisedec was a priest of the Most High God, and in his sacerdotal office, he had no predecessor or successor. So Christ is the great priest of our profession, and as none preceded him, so he abideth a priest continually. Melchisedec united both the royal and sacred offices in himself; so Christ is Lord, as well as Christ; he is King of the heavenly Salem, and shall reign for ever and ever. Melchisedec blessed Abraham, and gave him bread and wine; Jesus also instituted the ordinance, wherein these same elements are employed, as the symbols of his own body and precious blood, which he gave for the life of the world. Abraham in return, gave unto him tithes of all that he had; Christ in like manner, demands of his people an entire surrender and consecration of themselves, to his service and glory. How limited the space of Melchisedec's office! How extensive that of Christ, the priest of his universal church. How short in duration that of Melchisedec, how abiding that of Christ! Do I rely on the nature of the sacrifice he has presented? Do I trust to the prevalency of his

ntercession? Have I received from his lips the true blessing my soul requires? Do I live by faith on the Son of God?

Jan. 20.

RESEMBLANCE BETWEEN ISAAC AND CHRIST.

Offered up Isaac.—Heb. xi. 17

AMONG the persons who typified Christ, Isaac seems to have occupied a prominent place. His conception by Sarah when she was past age, seems to remind us of the mysterious conception of Christ by the virgin. His being the only son of Abraham by Sarah, seems intended to direct our minds to Christ as the only begotten of the Father. The birth of Isaac was long predicted, so the appearance of the Redeemer, to him gave all the prophets witness. But the Scripture which heads these lines refers to one circumstance in the eventful history of Isaac.—He was “*offered up.*” Where was he offered up? On mount Moriah. And it is probable that Calvary, where Christ actually suffered, was a prominence of the same mountain. In preparing for the offering, Isaac carried the wood to the spot, and we behold Jesus ascending the steep and rugged Calvary, bearing his own cross. Isaac

was to be offered up as a burnt offering, in like manner, Christ was really sacrificed, and as a lamb without spot offered himself through the eternal spirit to God. Abraham was to be the priest on this occasion, and was commanded to take the knife and slay his son. In reference to Jesus, "it pleased the Father to bruise him, he hath put him to grief, when he made his soul an offering for sin." (Is. liii. 10.) Hence also that very striking passage in the prophecies, by Zechariah, "Awake O sword against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts, smite the Shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered." (xiii. 7.) The cup which Christ drank was given to him by his Father. In the readiness of Isaac to suffer, who had now arrived at years of maturity, we see set forth the voluntariness of Jesus, in dying for the sins of a guilty and perishing world. But for Isaac a substitute was found. He was only figuratively offered. For Jesus no substitute existed, he was really offered, and died the just, for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. It behoved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead. How deeply interested we should feel in remembering that Christ loved and gave himself for us. Shall we not mourn when we look on him, whom we have pierced with our sins?

"But drops of grief will ne'er repay,
The debt of love we owe,
Here Lord we give ourselves away,
'Tis all that we can do."

Jan. 21.

JOSEPH AND CHRIST COMPARED.

*Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children.—
Gen. xxxvii. 3.*

THIS we do not vindicate, and the manifestation of this extreme partiality was fraught with much bitterness. But at present we are to see in what respects Joseph seemed to have prefigured the Redeemer. His name signifies, increase. Of Christ, the prophet says, "of the increase of his government there shall be no end." (Is. ix. 7.) John the Baptist said "I must decrease, but he must increase." (iii. 30.) Joseph was the greatly beloved of his father; in Christ, God's soul delighted, in him he was ever well pleased. Joseph was imbued with the spirit of wisdom, and hence was called Zaphneth-paaneah, that is expounder of secrets. In Jesus dwelt all the fulness of wisdom and knowledge. He came and revealed the mystery which had been hid for ages, and published the glorious doctrines of life and immortality. Joseph was distinguished for the integrity of his heart, and the uprightness of his life. Christ was holy, harmless, and undefiled, guile was never found in his mouth. Joseph was sent to seek his brethren, and to promote their welfare. Christ was sent as the brother of man, to promote the eternal well-being of the human family. Joseph was hated of his brethren, and they con-

spired to take away his life. Christ came to his own, but his own received him not, but sought to kill him, and long thirsted for his blood. Joseph was sold for twenty pieces of silver, Christ also was cruelly betrayed, and for thirty pieces of silver was delivered into the hands of his enemies. Joseph was falsely accused and cast into prison, Christ also was subjected to a mock trial, falsely condemned, and cast into the prison of the grave. Joseph predicted the restoration of one, and the execution of the other of those who were in prison with him. Christ also on the cross assured one of the malefactors that, on that day he should be with him in Paradise, while it is to be feared the other perished in unbelief. Joseph was afterwards exalted to sit on the throne of Pharoah, and to govern the whole land. Jesus also when he had suffered, was exalted to the right hand of the Majesty on High, where he sits as the universal governor, and the especial ruler of his church. Joseph forgave his cruel brethren and provided for his father's house, in the rich and fruitful land of Goshen. Jesus now waits to shed down the tokens of his grace upon the children of men, and finally to receive all true believers to his kingdom of glory. Am I interested in his gracious regards? Do I enjoy his heavenly favor? Am I now living to his honor, so that I may anticipate the enjoyment of his presence for ever? As none but Joseph could give corn to the famishing

of old, so none but Jesus can give the bread of life to the hungry perishing sinner.

Jan. 22.

CHRIST THE STAR OUT OF JACOB
AND THE
BRIGHT AND MORNING STAR.

Star out of Jacob.—Numb. xxiv. 17.

The Bright and Morning Star.—Rev. xxii. 16.

CHRIST Jesus is evidently set forth in both these passages. Balaam who had attempted to sell himself to curse Israel, and to predict evil upon them, is constrained to admire, to bless, and to predict the appearance of Messiah, who should be their consolation and glory. He refers especially to the Saviour's lineage, as coming out of Jacob; of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Then he refers to Christ as a star, and as such he is distinguished for his brilliancy, all the glory of Deity dwells in him and emanates from him. He is distinguished for the purity and splendour of his rays. He is the light, both of earth and heaven. He said I am the light of the world. All saving knowledge proceeds from him. The Glory of the Celestial Temple in like manner proceeds from his refulgent rays. As a star, he is fixed, immutable and eternal. He is the *Bright Star*

All the luminaries of heaven combined, are but as a taper, contrasted with him. He is the *Morning* star. He introduced the *Morning of hope* to our first parents, immediately after the fall. He introduced the *Morning of the Gospel*, by his blessed and glorious incarnation in the flesh. He introduces the *Morning of Spiritual day*, into the believing heart, "Christ in you the hope of glory." He shall introduce the *Morning of Millennial glory*, by the brightness of his second appearing. He will also finally arise as the Morning Star, in the day of final judgment; which will be followed by the changeless light of a glorious eternity. What an object for Christian contemplation; how necessary that its rays should attract us; how desirable that we should feel its illuminating influences, and that we should enjoy in our souls the spiritual day of salvation, that we may look with cheering confidence to his glorious appearing the second time, when he will effect the complete redemption of his people.

Jan. 23.

CHRIST LIKE UNTO MOSES.

Like unto thee.—Deut. xviii. 18.

THIS is part of a prediction which Moses delivered unto the children of Israel; wherein God had promised to raise them up a prophet, like unto himself, unto whom in all things they should hearken

We know that many of the ancient worthies, were eminent types of the Redeemer, and were raised up to shadow forth the offices and works of the glorious Messiah. None did this more fully and significantly than Moses. The points of resemblance, are particularly striking and abundant. His wonderful preservation from the cruel edict of Pharoah, reminds us of the deliverance of Jesus from the murderous purpose of Herod. Both were distinguished for eminent wisdom. Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. Christ possessed all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Moses voluntarily assumed *poverty and reproach*, he forsook the riches and honours of Pharoah's court. Christ who was infinitely and inexhaustibly rich, yet for our sakes, was so poor, that he had not where to lay his head. Moses was a *Prophet, Leader, Deliverer, and Intercessor* in Israel. Jesus also was the Great Prophet of Israel, the infallible Guide of his flock, the Great Captain of Salvation, and the illustrious High Priest of our profession. Moses wrought many splendid miracles. No man ever did the works which Christ did; and all his miracles were of a gracious character, and effected by his own power. Both Moses and Jesus fasted forty days and nights in the wilderness. Moses appointed seventy rulers of the people, and twelve men to search the good land—Jesus sent forth seventy disciples and twelve apostles to preach the gospel and establish his kingdom in the world. The law

came by Moses; and grace and truth by Jesus Christ. Moses revealed the will of God, and wrote the first part of the sacred volume — Jesus made known all the mind of the Father, and brought life and immortality to light by the gospel.

Jan. 24.

PART II.

CHRIST LIKE UNTO MOSES.

Like unto thee.--Deut. xviii. 18.

WE have already traced many points of resemblance between Moses and the Saviour, there are yet other features of likeness which are deserving of our attention. Moses gave the people *water* from the rock, and obtained for them the *manna* from heaven. That rock was typical of Christ, and the water, shewed forth the spiritual benefits we derive from him, he is the true *bread of life*, who came down from heaven. Moses was greatly envied, and suffered much from his countrymen, Jesus too came to his own, but they received him not, but sought to kill him, and finally effected their cruel and wicked design. Moses was distinguished for astonishing *meekness*, Jesus was so mild and holy, that he never spake one word amiss. Moses was constant and powerful in prayer, Jesus spent whole nights in devotion, and he was

ever heard of his Father. Moses was noted for his unabating *zeal* and *fidelity*. The zeal of the Lord's house, seemed to consume the soul of Christ, and as a son, he was faithful in all things, and did the whole work given to him of the Father. Moses instituted the *passover*, and received from the Lord the entire pattern of the tabernacle and its service; Jesus instituted breaking of bread, his own supper, wherein he appears as the "true passover, sacrificed for us." Moses was called to retire to a neighbouring mountain, and *die there*, before the people entered into the good land. Jesus also by the appointment of his Father, died on the top of Calvary, that believers might not perish, but have everlasting life. It is impossible to contemplate the characters of the type and antitype, without perceiving in the latter, "that a greater than Moses is here." Moses was a servant and a man; Christ was a Son, and equal with the Father. Moses had sinful infirmities; Jesus was immaculate, holiness embodied. Moses possessed largely of the Spirit of prophecy; but the Holy Ghost descended *wholly* upon Christ. Moses introduced an economy exceedingly burdensome, and doomed to perish Jesus founded a spiritual dispensation, without any galling yoke, and destined to a glorious consummation. We may admire Moses; but we are constrained to love Jesus. We may read Moses; but believe in Jesus. We may honour Moses; but we

are called to adore and worship Jesus. In all things Christ must have the preeminence.

Jan. 25.

JOSHUA A TYPE OF THE REDEEMER.

For if Jesus had given them rest.—Heb. iv. 8.

THE passage which heads this exercise refers to Joshua, unto whom the direction and rule of Israel was committed after the death of Moses. In several respects he was eminently typical of the Lord Jesus Christ. His name is precisely the same in Hebrew as Jesus in Greek — signifying saviour. He was appointed to be the temporal saviour of Israel—Christ the spiritual and eternal saviour of his church. Moses preceded Joshua, and prepared the way for his engagements ; so, likewise, the whole economy of Moses was designed to be introductory to that of Christ and his gospel. The law was intended as a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. Moses could not give the people rest, or bring them into possession of the good land ; this was reserved for Joshua : so neither Moses nor yet the law which came by him, could give true rest to the soul ; his was a yoke of heavy services and ceremonies : but Christ did offer true and saving rest, and a yoke which is easy, and a burden that is truly light. The waters of Jordan were divided by Joshua—

in the same waters Christ was baptized; when the heavens were divided, and God attested of him as his beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased. Joshua overthrew the walls of Jericho by the sounding of rams' horns: Christ, in like manner, overthrew the powers and kingdom of darkness by the foolishness of preaching; the instruments being tax-gatherers and fishermen. While Joshua was engaged in combating the enemies of Israel, the sun stood still: while Jesus was spoiling principalities and powers on his cross, there was darkness over all the land. Joshua, as the captain of God's host, led them into the land of promise: "so it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of our salvation perfect through suffering." (Heb. ii. 10.) Joshua had to do with the temporal interests of the united hosts of Israel: but Christ with the immortal interests of the unnumbered members of his church. Joshua gave them a transient rest on earth: Christ gives an abiding rest in heaven. Shall we not be obedient, humble, and believing, lest we fall in the desert, like the thousands of rebellious Israel, and are excluded from God's prepared and promised rest.

Jan. 26.

DAVID A TYPE OF CHRIST.

And my servant David, a Prince among them.—

Ezek. xxxiv. 24.

THESE words were uttered many years after David had gone the way of all flesh; and therefore could not possibly refer to him. We shall find no difficulty in discovering the person to whom they were intended to apply. That person was obviously the Lord Jesus Christ, of whom David was a distinguished type. David signifies beloved; and Christ is beloved in a preeminent degree—beloved of the Father, beloved of angels, and the beloved of his church. David was a shepherd, and manifested the greatest tenderness towards his flock, and magnanimously rescued them from the lion and the bear. Jesus is the good shepherd who laid down his life for the sheep, that he might deliver them from the power of the devil, and from eternal death. David was an eminent prophet, and delivered many celebrated predictions respecting Christ and his church: Jesus is the great prophet, who made known perfectly the will of God, and who has revealed all things necessary concerning his church to the end of the world. David was a king, and reigned in Jerusalem: Jesus is king of kings, and reigns gloriously in the midst of his spiritual Zion. David was a successful warrior, and overcame both his secret and public adversaries: Christ is the Bozrah

conqueror, travelling in the greatness of his strength, mighty in battle, and who will finally make all his enemies his footstool. David composed most of the songs of Zion, and took a deep concern in the welfare of the Lord's house: Jesus has provided the sweet odes of gospel melody, for the peace and joy of his people; and he dwells constantly in the midst of his church. (Rev. i. 12—20.) David was distinguished for eminent holiness, and was a man after God's own heart: Jesus was purity embodied; he was absolutely immaculate. We are not to forget how deficient in this, as in every other case, is the type to the antitype. David was a man, and as such had many frailties: Christ was the GOD-MAN, and was free from the least imperfection. Are we the sheep of the Good Shepherd, the people of this great prophet, the subjects of this glorious monarch, the soldiers of this triumphant conqueror? Can we say, This beloved is ours, and we are his?

Jan. 27.

CHRIST A REDEEMER.

I know that my Redeemer liveth.—Job. xix. 25.

SUCH was the confident and happy assurance of the celebrated and pious Job. And such language may be adopted by every believing sinner. Man

had forfeited his *liberty*, and had become the slave of Satan. Man had forfeited his inheritance, and had become a wretched perishing outcast. Man had forfeited his life, and had become the victim of mortality. Man had forfeited his soul, and was justly exposed to the indignation and righteous wrath of God. Christ is the sinner's Redeemer. He alone possesses merit and ability for the work. As the Divine Son of God, he is endowed with all the infinite perfections of the Father. He is both the wisdom and power of God. It behoved him as the Redeemer, to become kindred to those who were to be redeemed. Hence he was made of a woman, made under the law *that* he might redeem them that were under the law. (Gal. iv. 4.) The redemption he accomplished, was both by price and power. He bought us to God. (2 Pet. ii. 1.) The purchase price, was his own blood, — the precious blood of Christ! (Rev. v. 9. 1 Pet. i. 19.) By his almighty power, he also overcame our adversaries, he bruised the head of the old serpent, spoiled principalities and powers, and made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. (Col. ii. 15.) He also became the spoiler of death, and the plague of the grave, opening a passage through it, by his glorious resurrection from the dead, and as a complete conqueror; he led captivity captive, ascended on high, and received gifts for men. What a glorious and unrivalled Redeemer! How dignified his character; how momentous his under-

taking: how complete his engagements! Our Redeemer, is the mighty one of Jacob, the Lord of Hosts is his name.

Jan. 28.

PART II.

CHRIST A REDEEMER.

I know that my Redeemer liveth.—Job. xix. 25.

JESUS as our Redeemer, has completely changed the condition and prospects of mankind. Through the fall, we were involved in sin, bondage, and misery, and exposed to eternal death. Christ has redeemed us from sin, from its enthralling and degrading influence, and from its present and everlasting consequences. Jesus redeemed us from the curse of the law, and from the bitterness of eternal death. Jesus has redeemed us into a state of access to God. Now there is a way open, whereby we may come to God, even to his seat; where, under the character of just, as well as merciful, he can dispense pardon and life to the believing sinner. Christ's redemption, is a redemption from darkness to light, from sin to holiness, from wretchedness to peace, from hell to heaven, and from the power of Satan, to the enjoyment and image of the blessed God. This redemption was first intimated in the predic-

tion immediately after the fall, was often renewed by promise to the patriarchs, was typified by the victims offered on the ancient altars of sacrifice, was the burden of prophecy, and was finished by Christ's expiring shout upon the cross. Christ alone possessed the power and merit by which it could be effected; therefore there is not, nor ever was, any other by which we can be saved. The Father appointed and sent him forth to redeem the world. The Spirit descended and wholly rested upon him, that he might effectually accomplish it. And he ardently and zealously came forth, and rested not until he had finished all the work which this mighty undertaking involved. This Redeemer is the joy of heaven, for all the celestial hosts, worship and adore him. He is the terror of hell, for at his presence, the devils fear and tremble. He is the salvation of earth, and it is the happy province of the christian minister, to call upon the dying sinner, to "behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world."

Jan. 29 .

CHRIST MY LIVING REDEEMER.

I know that my Redeemer liveth.—Job. xix. 25.

THERE are three words connected with this passage of preeminent importance First,—Christ is a

Living Redeemer. Before his incarnation, he lived, and was in the bosom of his Father, his joy and delight. Before the everlasting hills were laid, countless ages before time began to roll, he lived and was Jehovah's fellow, and was always rejoicing before him. (Prov. viii. 23—31.) Christ was co-existent with the Father—from everlasting to everlasting, God. As our Redeemer, he was crucified and put to death; but he was not holden of death, but by his almighty power he arose; and though dead, he is now alive again, and liveth for evermore. He is not only a living Redeemer, but the great fountain of life: he has life in himself, and is the life of the world. The first Adam long since died; but the second Adam ever liveth. Patriarchs and prophets, priests and apostles, have died, but the Head of the Church—the Great High Priest and Apostle of our profession—ever liveth. Did he not live, he could not save, and impart life to others. II.—Christ is *my* Redeemer. Job could appropriate Christ to himself; and less than this cannot give hope and comfort to the soul. My beloved is mine; and I am his. We must feel that he loved *us*, and gave himself for *us*. The believing soul says he is mine; for he is the Redeemer of the lost and the perishing, and I am one of the lost and the perishing. He is mine; for he has enabled me to throw myself at his feet, and look up to his cross. He is mine; for my hands

are laid upon his sacred head — my iniquities he has borne away. III. — I *know* that my Redeemer liveth. I know he is mine. He has said to my soul “I am thy salvation.” He has spoken peace. He has justified me. He has shed abroad his love within my heart. His Spirit bears witness with my spirit. He dwells within me the hope of glory. I *know* that he liveth. He lives in my heart, as the resurrection and the life. He lives in the church on earth, as its head, and source of vitality and support. He lives on his mediatorial throne in heaven, and ever maketh intercession for us. How delightful! — how necessary! — to feel and know that our Redeemer liveth. What present satisfaction and joy it produces, and what solid comfort and hope as to our future and eternal state!

Jan. 30.

CHRIST STANDING IN THE LATTER DAY UPON THE EARTH.

And that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.

Job. xix. 25.

THIS remarkable prediction of the Messiah, evidently refers to his glorious incarnation. Then did Job feel that his Redeemer was alive: but he also confidently looked onwards to a period, when he should become a visitor of man, and a resident on

earth. Then, Job's Redeemer was highly exalted amid the glory of the celestial temple, receiving the ceaseless worship of seraphim and cherubim; but he saw a period when he would leave his heavenly habitation, and be found in our world, in fashion as a man. The period referred to, is the *latter day*. This latter day, is represented as the day of Christ, the day which Abraham saw afar off, and was glad. This day began with Christ's advent, and will only terminate with his second appearance, when he shall come without a sin offering, to the complete salvation of his people. During this day, Christ did *stand upon the earth*; he stood before men, as their Great Prophet, unveiling to them the mysteries of heaven; he stood as the Great Lawgiver, of his Church, and the example of purity, goodness, and truth; he stood there as the world's philanthropist, and hence his life was exhausted in acts of unrivalled and universal beneficence; he stood there as our *Redeemer*, and bore the assault of the powers of hell, and overcame on our behalf all our enemies. He stood and received the cup of incensed wrath, and trod the winepress of the Divine indignation alone; he stood there until he had fulfilled the whole plan of redemption, and had completely extricated our world from the sentence of eternal death. But we have already hinted that there will be another advent, that Christ will come again, and stand a second time on the earth. It seems highly probable that this might be the appearing, to which Job

especially referred, as he connects with it his own resurrection and beatific vision of the blessed God. Yes, Christ will again stand on the earth, and raise to life and immortality, his sleeping saints, and clothe them with all the beauty of unfading youth. Blessed are all they who are looking for him. Even so come Lord Jesus. Come quickly. Amen.

Jan. 31.

THE NAME JESUS GIVEN.

And thou shalt call his name, Jesus.—Matt. i. 21.

JOSEPH, the espoused husband of the virgin, was the person, to whom the name which the Redeemer should bear, was announced. The Messenger was an angel of the Lord, who was sent to remove all his suspicions and fears, respecting Mary. The name itself was Jesus, which strictly signifies, JEHOVAH, the SAVIOUR, or JEHOVAH, SALVATION. And it was given to him, because salvation was his work and object; “for he shall save his people from their sins.” The name Jesus, was the most appropriate name which Messiah could receive. Consider the *predictions* which had been delivered by the ancient prophets: they all referred to him as a Saviour. Consider his covenant engagements with the Father, they were all connected with salvation. He engaged to redeem the world, and to save all who

should believe. Consider the state and condition of the human family; they did not require legislators, or philosophers, or poets, these they had in abundance, but they required a Saviour. Consider the usurped dominion of Satan, as God of this world; view his empire in its despotism, in the cruelty and misery produced in the souls of men, and ask yourselves, what would be the greatest gift heaven could confer? and you will readily admit, a Saviour. Consider men, as destined to an endless duration of existence, and by reason of sin, that existence, irreparably one of separation from the holy presence of God, and one of condemnation and wrath with kindred spirits in a world of woe, and then every thing appears trifling and worthless, except a Saviour. Finally, consider men in their extensive powers and amazing faculties, capable of infinite improvement, and of unspeakable felicity; and remember that only by one means, could this exaltation and felicity be rendered possible, and that by the appearance and work of a Saviour. How precious then is this name; how associated with all that is momentous to our world.

“ Jesus, the name to sinners dear,

“ The name to sinners given ;

“ It scatters all their guilty fear,

“ It turns their hell to heaven.”

Feb. 1.

PART II.

THE NAME JESUS GIVEN.

And thou shalt call his name Jesus.—Matt. i. 21.

WE have already considered the appropriateness of this precious name. Consider now its authority, influence, and power. This name is the authority by which the gospel is preached. Repentance and remission of sins are to be preached *only* in his name. (Luke xxiv, 47.) The apostle, therefore, assured the high priest and rulers, that “there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.” (Acts iv. 12.) In like manner, also, we find that baptism was to be administered in his name. Hence, when the multitude under Peter’s sermon cried out “men and brethren, what must we do?” he said, “repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ.” So also, those who heard Paul preach at Ephesus “were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.” This name is associated with all the duties of the christian life and character. We are to meet for public worship in his name. We are to offer up both our praises and supplications in his name. Yea, we are enjoined to do all in the name of the Lord Jesus. (Col. iii. 17.)

As this name is authoritative, so is it also amazingly *powerful* and *influential*. Devils fled before

it. At its sound diseases vanished. When uttered aloud, the dead heard it and lived. Wherever it was preached, pagan temples became desolate, pagan altars were overthrown, and men were turned from dumb and senseless idols to the living God. And this name possesses all its original marvellous virtue and power. By it men are changed from darkness to light. By it we have forgiveness of sin, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. It is this that gives power to preaching, solidity to ordinances, and efficacy to prayer. In one word—we have *life*, in all its comprehensiveness and perpetuity, in his name. (John xx. 30.) Shall not this name, then, have a preeminence in our affections? Shall it not be the theme of our praises on earth, as it will assuredly be the burden of our songs in heaven. But this name demands our adoration, on account of its dignity and sacredness; our subjection, on account of its authority and power—“at the name of Jesus every knee should bow.” (Phil. ii. 10.) And it also especially demands our faith; for we are healed, accepted, and eternally saved, by faith in his name.

“ Jesus ! transporting sound !

The joy of earth and heaven ;

No other help is found ;

No other name is given

By which we can salvation have,

But Jesus came the world to save.”

Feb. 2.

PART III.

THE NAME, JESUS.

*Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.—**Matt, i. 21.*

THE name Jesus was given to the Redeemer, because he should save his people from their sins. To save, is to rescue, or deliver. Now he came to rescue a perishing world, to deliver a guilty, rebellious race. He came to deliver, or save "*from sin*," because it was sin that had ruined us, and any salvation short of this, would have been inefficient to men's happiness and safety. He came to save "*his people*," the Jews, of whom, as concerning the flesh he came, and to whom he first revealed and offered mercy. Or it may mean those who believe upon him, whether Jew or Gentile, as it is only such who become the Sons of God, and truly enjoy the blessings of Christ's salvation. (John i. 12.) He came to save his people from "*their*" sins. Sin is a personal matter, it is a disease within our own hearts, it is a plague spot, with which every human being is defiled. Salvation must therefore be personal. It must not suffice to say Christ is here, or there, the kingdom of God must be within us. Christ "*came*" to save us. Prophets had been sent, and one generation of Priests had succeeded another; but none came to save, but Jesus. None else had

the qualifications, the merit, the power, necessary for this great work. And Christ does save his people from their sins. He saves from the guilt of sin by his forgiving love and purifying grace; he saves from the pollution of sin, by his cleansing and sanctifying blood; he saves from the power of sin, by the converting and regenerating influences of his Spirit; he saves also from the love of sin; from the vassalage of sin; and from its dreadful consequences in the world to come. Christ's salvation is free, full, complete, and everlasting. Dear reader, art thou acquainted with Jesus; has he said to thy soul, "I am thy salvation"? How all-important that we feel the sentiment expressed by the Poet;

"Stung by the scorpion sin,
My poor expiring soul
The balmy sound drinks in,
And is at once made whole;
See there my Lord upon the tree!
I hear, I feel, he died for me."

Feb. 3.

THE BIRTH OF JESUS.

For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, Christ the Lord.—Luke ii. 17.

FOUR thousand years had rolled round, since God had given the promise of a Saviour to the world. Patriarchs, and prophets, and kings, had been look-

ing for its fulfilment, and hoping for its realization, but had died without the sight. At last however, an angel reveals to Mary, the highly favoured of the Lord, that she was to be mother of the long predicted Messiah. The same event is disclosed to Joseph, and now the actual appearance of Jesus is announced; "this day is born in the city of David, Christ the Lord." The place of the Redeemer's birth was Bethlehem, called in the text, "the city of David," the birth place of the illustrious psalmist, which had been referred to, by the prophet Micah. v. 2. Matt. ii. 5. Here the Redeemer made his first appearance in our world. "Unto you is born," said the celestial Messenger, to the astonished shepherds, "Christ the Lord." All that Jesus undertook, all that he did, all that he suffered, and all that he is now doing, is for us. He was born for our welfare and salvation. Love to us brought him from heaven to earth, from a throne to a manger, and from the glory, homage, and adoration of the holy hosts; to be clothed with human form, an helpless babe in the manger at Bethlehem. How important and illustrious that day! a day which Abraham had seen afar off, and which even then, had filled him with delight. A day, for which the church had been believing and hoping, and which had been the constant theme of every song, and the burden of every prayer. Now commenced the morning of the gospel era, the latter days, which were to be crowned with light, and life, and glory.

Behold the morning star, with its brilliant rays, illumines the horizon; and while the shepherds gaze in wonder, the tidings of a Saviour's birth are revealed. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, Christ the Lord. How changed the terms made use of, previously it had been predicted and promised that at some future time, Messiah should appear; but the glorious event is now realized. Unto you is *born*; he now lives, of whom all the prophets spake; the first event in the history of redemption has taken place. The child is born, the son is given, the mercy promised to the Fathers, hath now appeared; God indeed is dwelling with men upon the earth. For this day is born unto you, Christ the Lord.

Feb. 4.

THE ANGELICK SONG AT THE BIRTH OF JESUS.

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, and good will towards men.—Luke ii. 14.

THE birth of Jesus produced this illustrious song. A song, connected with God and men, and with heaven and earth. A song, which gives the highest glory to Jehovah, and which announces sweetest peace, and good will to men. Sin had eclipsed the Divine glory, violated the Divine command, and

covered the seat of Divine majesty, with clouds and darkness. Jesus came expressly to reveal unto us the Father; that he might exhibit to a guilty world, the beauties of his divine perfection, especially the spotlessness of his holiness, and the boundlessness of his mercy and love. The glory of God is seen in every object creation presents to our eyes. The world is full of his glory. But in that redemption of which Christ's birth was the first grand step,

“The whole Deity is known;
Nor dares the creature guess
Which of the glories brightest shone,
The justice or the grace.”

Sin had produced anarchy and rebellion in our earth, man was found in arms against God. And the face of God was against the sinner. But now appears the heavenly ambassador, who comes with a message of peace to rebel man, and to introduce the gospel of reconciliation by which heaven and earth should be united in bonds of harmony and love. Not only was Christ's appearance a token of peace, but also of “good will.” God had revealed his mercy by prophets and priests: but now appears the pledge: now appears in an embodied form, the love of God, in that he does not spare his own son, but delivers him up for us all. His good will was so great, so inexpressibly great, that his own son is the appointed propitiatory sacrifice; that he might be the just God, and yet the Saviour. This

good will also, includes the favour and fellowship of angels; they are not indifferent spectators, but are deeply interested in all that relates to the Divine glory, and in all that refers to human felicity. They greatly rejoice on the occasion, and in strains of exultation and joy, sing in delightful concert, "glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and good will towards men." We are now come to an innumerable company of angels. They minister to the saints on earth, and form one happy and unbroken fellowship with them in heaven. Do I rejoice in the sentiments contained in this celestial song? Am I concerned for the Divine glory? Have I peace with God through Christ; and do I participate in the gracious regards, the good will of God? The subject of the angels' song ought not only to be clear to our understanding, but full of glowing comfort and joy to our hearts.

Feb. 5.

THE VISIT OF THE EASTERN MAGI- CIANS TO CHRIST.

And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child, with Mary his mother.—Matt. ii. 11.

THESE celebrated persons whose journey is thus recorded, were Persian philosophers, men of superior learning, and whose chief study, most probably,

was that of astronomy. Their attention was arrested, by the extraordinary appearance of a new star or rather brilliant meteor; and a great expectation prevailing at this period, that some eminent person would appear, they directed their steps to Jerusalem, that they might enquire where the long predicted and earnestly expected Messiah should be born. Bethlehem being the place spoken of by the prophet Micah, they proceed on their interesting journey, until, at last, the meteor became stationary over the place where Jesus was. Then immediately follows the interview: the toil, and expenses of their journey is rewarded, by beholding the *young child* with Mary his mother. And what did they feel, when they beheld the little babe, in a place so poor and mean, and under such circumstances of earthly humiliation? Were they disappointed? Did they turn aside in disgust? Did they regret their extended journey? No; confident that the whole was supernatural—that the finger of God was in it—they believe in the infant Prince, and worship at his feet. Several instructive lessons are taught us by the history of these worshippers of Jesus. By nature, we are all far from Christ. To guide us to Jesus, we have the star of the gospel, as a light shining in a dark place. Following its gracious rays, we shall assuredly be brought to the presence of the Saviour. If we turn aside to human learning or human expedients, as the sages did when they went to Jerusalem, we shall cease to

be benefited by the star. When come to Jesus, we shall find no earthly pomp, or worldly splendour, his kingdom is not of this world. But we shall find the child given, the son born, the wonderful counsellor, the prince of peace. In him we shall obtain righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Feb. 6.

THE OFFERINGS OF THE WISE MEN TO JESUS.

And fell down and worshipped him ; and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts, gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.—Matt. ii. 11.

NOTWITHSTANDING the very humble situation in which they find the child Jesus, the faith of the wise men embraces him, as the long-expected and new-born king. Hence they fall down before him, and worship him. Then they opened their treasures, and presented unto him gifts. I. They give him gold, as a sort of voluntary tribute, as king “To him shall be given of the gold of Sheba.” II. They give him frankincense, as a divine priest, whose business it was to burn it on the sacred altar. III. They give him myrrh, as a man — as a token of that which should embalm his mortal remains. Or rather, leaving particular interpretation out of the matter, they gave him the most precious things

their country possessed. Here then we behold the industrious perseverance of these men, their strong and vigorous faith, their profound humility, and, finally, their gratitude and noble generosity. By their gifts the Saviour was provided with the means of being conveyed into Egypt, and of abiding there until the death of the murderous Herod. Behold, then, in the star, an emblem of the glorious gospel. In the wise men, an illustrious example of faith, perseverance, and liberality. And in their presence at the feet of Christ a certain token of that success which shall assuredly crown the efforts of all who seek Jesus in spirit and in truth. And now let us daily present unto Jesus the myrrh of repentance for our sins; the frankincense of faith in his precious merits, as the only sacrifice for guilt; and the gold of our supreme love, as the beloved of our souls, the joy of our hearts, and our salvation for ever.

Feb. 7.

THE PRESENTATION OF JESUS.

They brought him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord.—Luke ii. 22.

It behoved Christ to be subjected to all the ceremonies of the law. Hence, when eight days old, according to the law, he underwent the rite of circumcision. In addition to this, there was the ordi-

nance of presentation, when the mother should appear in the temple with her first child, and should offer a sacrifice to the Lord. If the person was rich, the law required a lamb and pigeon; if poor, a small gift only was required. Such being the case with Mary, she offered "a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons." The act itself was designed to imply the giving up of the child, as the first fruit, to the Lord. Whatever difference may exist in the church, as to the propriety of infant baptism, there can be none as to the importance of presenting our children by believing prayer to God. Children are the gifts of heaven; and the best way of expressing our gratitude to the giver, and our love to the gifts, is to dedicate them, as far as we can to God and train them up in the way of divine fear and obedience. Never had mother such a child to present, as on this occasion. A child in whom were embodied all the glories of the Godhead. Never was the temple so honoured as now, when the saying of the prophet was literally accomplished—"The glory of the latter house shall be greater than that of the former. And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of Hosts." (Hag. ii. 6. 9.) Never was a child to be dedicated, so connected with the divine glory, and to all that is interwoven with the great and immortal concerns of a dying world. This offer-

ing conferred unrivalled dignity on both the temple and the priest. And never did God receive a consecrated child with such complacency and delight. How pleasing it is to contemplate every part and stage of human existence as sanctified by Christ. He has sanctified the helplessness of infancy, by being the infant of days. He who bears up all systems and all worlds, was carried and borne up a little child before the Lord. He whom all the celestial hosts delight to worship and honour, was carried to the temple, there to receive the prayer and blessing of him who ministered before the altar. We cannot fail to be reminded, also, of the great pleasure and interest which Jesus afterwards took in little children. How he rebuked the disciples who would have kept them at a distance, and how he took them in his arms, and blessed them, saying "of such is the kingdom of God."

Feb. 8.

CHRIST IN THE ARMS OF SIMEON.

*Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God.
Luke ii. 28.*

CHRIST's appearance had been predicted for many hundreds of years, and the pious and believing Jews ever lived anxiously waiting to behold the illustrious event. Among the most devout and holy of these, was Simeon, whose character and history

are briefly narrated in the verses connected with the text. To Simeon it had been graciously revealed, that he should not see death, until he had seen the Lord's Christ. When Christ was presented, the Spirit directed Simeon to the temple at the same time. Then was his hope realized, then was the great desire of his heart fulfilled; now life was no longer necessary, and therefore he took the child Jesus up in his arms, and blessed God, exclaiming, "Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." From this peculiarly interesting narrative, we learn,—I. Where Christ is to be found. In his temple. His church is his abiding place; this he has made his rest for ever. The Spirit and the word, both direct us to the ordinances of his house. Here if we come in faith, we shall assuredly meet with the Lord's Christ. II. The eye of faith, has Christ for its object. Simeon beheld the Redeemer, and was filled with holy joy. And to whom shall the lost and perishing look, but unto Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life. To whom shall the sin-stung sinner direct his eyes, but unto him who was expressly lifted up, that we might not perish, but have everlasting life. III. When we see Christ by an eye of faith, then do we behold God's salvation. Christ is God's salvation, selected, appointed, and sent forth of the Father. He is the only Mediator between God and us, and there is salvation in none other. IV. Christ must

be embraced in the arms of affection and delight. We must have him in close connexion with our souls. He must dwell in our hearts, and be to us the fairest among ten thousand, yea the altogether lovely. V. Christ received by faith, and love, will excite us to thankfulness, and devoted praise to God. And when he took him up in his arms, he blessed God. And in the possession of this celestial treasure, the soul will be constrained to exclaim, "thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift." We bless God for health, and food, and raiment, and reason. How much more then for the gift of gifts, the fountain of every other mercy, and without which life itself must terminate in all the agony and despair of the second death. VI. When Christ is possessed, then we are ready either for life or death. If we live, we shall live to him; and if we die, we shall depart in peace, our eyes having seen God's salvation.

Feb. 9.

CHRIST AMONG THE DOCTORS.

They found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors.—Luke ii. 46.

JESUS was now twelve years of age; and attended his mother and reputed father to the feast of the passover at Jerusalem. The period of their return having arrived, his parents, on the end of their

first day's journey homewards, perceived that he was not in their company; on which they return to Jerusalem, and on the third day they found him sitting among the doctors, in one of the chambers attached to the temple, both hearing them and asking them questions. In this simple and beautiful narration, we are led to contemplate *the intellectual greatness of the Redeemer's character*.—He had lived with his parents at Nazareth; and he had doubtless received no educational advantages, by which his powers could be improved. But, notwithstanding this, he possessed all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. — He was quite capable, when only twelve years old, of understanding all the subtle reasonings of the doctors of the law; and therefore we find him, not as a mere gazing quiet spectator, but as an intelligent observer; sitting in the midst of them, both hearing them and asking questions. We are also led to consider this occurrence, as realizing the truth of ancient types, and as fulfilling the testimonies of prophecy. Moses was a distinguished type of the Redeemer, for he was learned not only in all the learning of the Egyptians, but in the will and laws of God. Here, then, we view the great and glorious Antitype, when only twelve years of age, in the midst of those very men who made the laws of Moses their daily study, “hearing them and asking them questions.” David and Solomon also typified the Redeemer. The former could say “I have more understanding than all my teachers,”

and Solomon was wise above all men who ever lived. Thus we behold him whom they typically represented, so gifted in his youth as to display his knowledge in the midst of the most learned assembly that any nation of that age could produce.

Feb. 10.

PART II.

CHRIST AMONG THE DOCTORS.

They found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors.—Luke ii. 46,

It had been distinctly predicted, “that the spirit of the Lord was to rest upon Christ, as the spirit of counsel and of might, of wisdom and of knowledge, to make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord.” (Isaiah xi. 1–3.) Is it possible to conceive of a more direct or striking fulfilment of this prophecy, than when the lovely youth of Nazareth was found in the midst of the doctors, hearing them and asking them questions. Have we not also in this event, *the Saviour’s sanctification of the use of means*. We do not dispute for a single moment, that as he possessed wisdom in a degree never possessed by any other, so also that it was communicated in a manner peculiar to himself. Yet here we have one instance of the Saviour making use of the ordinary means, in the attainment of knowledge. He

is found in the place of the learned; he is sitting, which indicates a suitable position of body, and a patient and attentive state of mind; he listens to the discourses of those around him, and when the matter is not plain, or the information not satisfactory, he employs his own powers, and is found asking them questions. Readers, if you are thirsting after knowledge, go and do likewise. Was not this event, finally, a *Prelude of one part of that work which he came to execute*. The word of God had been greatly corrupted by these Doctors; false glosses had been given to divine truth; Jesus came to restore the law to its original purity; he came that the people might possess the unadulterated truths of the holy scriptures. These doctors were to be his chief opponents, so that he now seemed to appear as the ominous star of a morning, which was about to dawn, when the clouds of ignorance should be dispelled, and the true light of day should visit a benighted world. What were the immediate subjects to which he listened, or the questions he asked, we are not informed. One thing however is stated, "that all who heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers."

Feb. 11.

CHRIST ABOUT HIS FATHER'S BUSINESS.

*Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business.**Luke ii. 14.*

CHRIST came to be a pattern to us in all the relationships of life, which he filled. Hence it is recorded, when Joseph and Mary found him in the temple, that he went down to Nazareth, and was subject to them, No doubt his early life, was one spotless copy of affectionate obedience. His reply however to his mother, who asked, "why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold thy Father and I have sought thee sorrowing," is deserving of especial notice. "Wist ye not, said he, that I must be about my Father's business." He did not reject the authority which they exercised, but he sweetly reminded her, that he had another Father, and that his business, was of supreme importance. And how completely did all his life embody the sentiment thus expressed. It was for this he left the high abodes of bliss, and became an inhabitant of our world. For this, that he assumed a servant's form, and took a servant's place, that he might execute his Father's business. For what did the Redeemer live; wherefore was he subjected to toil, and poverty, and suffering, and reproach? was it not that he might accomplish his Father's business? And after he entered upon his

great official engagements; he never wearied, he never once turned aside from this great work. It was his meat and drink to do his Father's will; the zeal of his engagements absorbed all his soul, employed all his energies, engrossed all his time. By the sea shore, in the desert, on the summit of the mountain, when passing on the common roads of Judea, in the humble village, or in the streets of the city of Jewish solemnities, he was ever about his Father's business. At last the active department of that work was completed, and he satisfactorily exclaimed, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." (John xvii. 3.) And shortly afterwards he ended all he had engaged to bear and to suffer; and closed his work and life together, crying with a loud voice, "It is finished," and thus yielded up the Ghost. Dear reader, in this, Jesus hath left us an example, that we should follow his steps.

Feb. 12.

BAPTISM OF JESUS.

Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan, to be baptized of him.—Matt. iii. 13.

THE baptism of Jesus, was the first striking event connected with his public life. He was now about thirty years of age, when he appeared as a candidate

for this interesting rite. Until now he had dwelt at Nazareth, concealed from the rulers and doctors of the church, and unknown to the world in general. From Galilee to where John was baptizing, was about ninety miles : these Jesus cheerfully travelled, that he might pass through the waters of baptism, and be anointed for the great work of his public ministry. We now behold him standing before John, when the eyes of the illustrious harbinger are immediately fastened upon him. In him he perceives the long expected Messiah, the beloved Son of God. He therefore modestly declines to baptize Jesus : assigning as his reason his own need, rather to receive that ordinance from the hands of Christ. Jesus in reply, assures the humble John, that though he might be the Messiah, yet even as such, it became him as well as his disciples, to fulfil all righteousness. (v. 15.) Here the Redeemer evidently recognizes baptism as a part of righteousness, and teaches us clearly that whatever God commandeth, whether it may refer to a moral obligation, or to a ceremonial institution, that it becomes us, as an imperative duty, as an act of subjection, to the great Legislator, at once cheerfully and heartily to fulfil it. Here we have immaculateness baptized; here we have the Lord of all, in the hands of one of his servants, attending to an institution grounded on his own authority. Never was a servant more honoured than John was on this occasion. Never was an ordinance more gloriously recognized and hallowed

than that of baptism. Here is ample matter, by which our wonder and admiration may be excited; and where we are called to behold a striking model of humble and ready obedience.

Feb. 13.

PART II.

BAPTISM OF JESUS.

JOHN's objection to baptize Jesus, being overruled, we now see them descending into the waters of Jordan, and there the Redeemer is baptized. Jordan had often been distinguished in old testament history, once it had been divided by Joshua that the hosts of Israel might pass through to the land of promise. Now Jesus honours it by being buried beneath its streams, as an emblem of that death which he should suffer, that the believing hosts of the Lord, might have a free and glorious passage to the realms of the celestial Canaan. After he was baptized, he cometh up straightway out of the water, when lo, the most astonishing and wonderful phenomena distinguish the event. I.—*The heavens were opened.* The aerial heavens were divided asunder, and most probably the highest heaven, and the throne of the eternal became visible. In this case, the scene would resemble that which the dying Stephen beheld. (Acts vii. 55.)

And this manifestation of glory, indicated the arrival of that dispensation, which was emphatically designated the kingdom of heaven. II.—A voice was heard from the excellent glory, proclaiming Jesus, *the beloved of the Father*. Here Christ's sonship is attested by the Father. Here the Father's attachment and delight in Jesus, is proclaimed before both worlds. Heaven heard it, and the celestial hosts paid him the highest homage. Men heard it, and on the belief or rejection of the divine record, rested all their happiness, or all their woe. Doubtless devils heard, and it was portentous of their overthrow and ruin. In Jesus was the Father well pleased. Well pleased in the constitution of his person; well pleased in the holiness of his nature; well pleased in the voluntariness of his engagements; and well pleased in his obedience to the ordinance of baptism; and in the commencement of that glorious career of activity and benevolence, by which in connexion with his death, the redemption of the world was to be accomplished. And God is well pleased with all who imitate the example and obey the commandments of the Son of God. In this way only, shall heaven be opened to receive us, and in the final day, the approbation of God secured.

Feb. 14.

THE ANOINTING OF JESUS.

The Spirit of God descending like a Dove and lighting upon him.—Matt. iii. 16.

BOTH kings and priests were set apart to their offices, with anointing oil. Jesus had to sustain both offices in himself, like Melchisedec, he was king of Salem and priest of the most high God. The literal anointing with oil, typified the anointing of Jesus and his church with the Holy Ghost. Christ's anointing evidently took place when he was baptized. Then "the Spirit of God descending like a Dove lighted upon him." The description given of the Spirit's descent upon Jesus, like a Dove, may refer to those features of meekness, pity, and love, which are produced by the Spirit, and which so eminently distinguished the Redeemer; or, it may refer to the manner of the Dove in hovering over the place where it designs to fall. The term evidently signifies the same as that which is applied to the Spirit of God in the first creation, "and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." (Gen. i. 2.) Let it however, be observed, that Christ's anointing was indispensable to the execution of his great undertaking. For by this, as the man Christ Jesus, he was to be qualified for his prophetic, priestly, and regal offices, and by this he was to offer himself without spot to God. (Heb. ix. 14.)

Feb. 15.

PART II.

THE ANOINTING OF JESUS.

The Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him.—Matt. iii. 16.

ISAIAH had delivered two express predictions on the subject of Christ's anointing, (xi. 2. — lxi. 1.,) the latter of which Christ applied to himself in his first sermon in the synagogue at Nazareth. (Luke iv. 16, 21.) In the anointing of Jesus the Spirit wholly descended upon him, to others it had been apportioned according to duties, times, and circumstances, but Jesus possessed it in all its plenitude. For God, says John the Baptist, "giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him." (John iii. 34.) To Apostles in after times, and to the favoured members of the first churches, the Spirit was imparted in great abundance. To one was given the spirit of healing, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, &c., but to Christ the whole spirit was given undivided. He possessed it in all its diversity of operation, in all its fulness of power, in all its unspeakable glory. He became the depository of the Spirit, hence he said to his disciples, "If I go away, I *will* send the Comforter unto you." And hence the Spirit is emphatically designated the Spirit of Christ. (Rom. viii. 9.) Have we fellowship with Jesus, in his holy anointing? Have we received the Spirit into

our hearts, by which we have become a "holy nation," "a peculiar people," "a royal priesthood." Let that passage be carefully read where the Apostle saith, "now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." (2 Cor. i. 21.) And ought we not constantly to pray,

" If in my Father's love,
I share a filial part
Send down thy Spirit like a Dove,
To rest upon my heart."

Feb. 16.

THE TEMPTATION OF CHRIST.

Tempted of the Devil.—Matt. iv. 1.

IMMEDIATELY after the glorious events connected with the baptism and anointing of Jesus, his arduous work commences, the powers of darkness come forth against him, and in the next sentence to that where we read of the Father's approving voice, we meet with the passage which heads this exercise, that, "Jesus was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil." Several very striking circumstances were connected with this event. I.—There was the *dreariness of the scene*. He was tempted in the wilderness, a place which

afforded an affecting representation of that world which he came to redeem. For by reason of sin, our earth has connected with it all the sterility and dangers of the dreary desert. It was in Eden that man was overcome by the enemy, and by which Paradise became a wilderness. It is in the wilderness that the Adversary is first met by the conquering seed of the woman, by whose completed conquests the wilderness shall be glad, bud, and blossom as the rose, and again become paradise regained—the paradise of the Lord. We learn from this also, that in the deepest solitude, we are still exposed to the temptations of the Enemy of Souls. Observe, II.—The *Time of the temptation*. It was immediately after his heavenly recognition and anointing with the Holy Ghost. This should teach us that, after peculiar scenes of joy and elevation, Satan may be expected to use his utmost power to bring us into sin, darkness, and condemnation. The time also of Christ's temptation was immediately connected with the holy duties of retirement, meditation, and prayer. After enjoying the closest converse with his heavenly Father, after fasting for forty days and forty nights, Satan commences his terrific and fierce assaults. Need we wonder, then, that in the secluded scenes of domestic life, or in the still more silent retirement of our closets, Satan should direct his fiery darts at the people of God. Wherever we may be, we are exposed to this common foe of God

and man. How necessary that we should watch his movements, that we be not ignorant of his devices. The gospel armour is essential to the christian's safety.

Feb. 17

PART II.

THE TEMPTATION OF CHRIST.

Tempted of the Devil.—Matt. iv. 1.

HAVING noticed the place and time of the Saviour's temptation, let us observe III.—*The character of the tempter.* He was tempted of the Devil; that fallen angel, the leader of those spirits in crime, who kept not their first estate; the same malignant agent who tempted our first parents, and respecting whom, the promise relating to the woman's seed, was principally directed. His enmity to the human race was then declared, and every age in our world's history, has verified the declaration. His assaults had been directed against all grades in society, rich and poor, wise and ignorant, savage and civilized, and in too many instances with success. He had raged against the church of God; he had raised up violent persecutors; he had tried to rase its foundations, and now he assails the person of the Son of God. Knowing the dignity and power of Christ, it

manifested the most tremendous daring and temerity in the tempter. Then consider IV.—*The mode of temptation which he made use of.* He tempted him to discontent and dissatisfaction with his Father's arrangements, and urged him if he were the Son of God, to make stones into bread. He then tempted him to rash and unholy presumption, by requesting him to cast himself down from the pinnacle of the temple, trusting to the direct interposition of angelic preservation; for said he, "he *shall* give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." He then tempted Christ to idolatry, even to worship himself; promising him in reward, what was never his to bestow, viz. "the kingdoms of this world and the glory of them." Observe V.—*That Satan's temptations were unsuccessful.* All his stratagems were frustrated, all his attacks were repelled. And it is deserving of notice, that the word of God as the sword of the Spirit, was the instrument which Christ wielded in obtaining the victory. He invariably answered the wicked one, "It is written;" until at last the devil leaveth him, and angels minister unto him. O let us rejoice, that in human nature the enemy of souls hath been foiled. The second Adam was more than sufficient for man's dire and malignant foe. And this conquering Jesus, is the glorious captain of salvation; under

whose banner, conquest, glory, and immortality, are absolutely certain.

Feb. 18.

PART III.

THE TEMPTATION OF CHRIST.

Tempted of the Devil.—Matt. iv. 1.

Is it not desirable to ascertain the ends answered by the Saviour's temptation? It is obvious to us first of all, that Satan's influence is finite and limited. He is crafty, daring, and powerful, but still he is possessed only of finite energy and power. How happy is the reflection, that we have not to grapple with unbounded influence and almighty power. These qualities, belong only to the great and blessed God. We also learn that Satan can only tempt; he is not permitted to force or to compel. He may present the enticing snare, but there must be the consent and agreement of our own hearts before he can be successful. We know, too, that temptation is not sin. To this the best are liable; this the immaculate Jesus endured—and even good men may be subject to violent and monstrous temptations. Under these considerations, then, how cheering to remember that even the holy Jesus was thus tempted. Tempted to distrust, to presumption, to idolatry! We are

also instructed by Christ's temptation as to the importance of an intimate acquaintance with the Divine and Holy Scriptures. To each of Satan's suggestions, Christ opposed a passage from the word of God—and how can we imitate the example thus set us, if we are ignorant of that blessed word. And a general knowledge of the Bible is not sufficient, for it is deserving of especial notice, that Satan made use of quotations from the Scriptures, but, with his usual subtlety, left out an important part of the passage, *viz.*, that this promise of being kept referred to *all our ways*—all the ways to which God called and duty urged us; not if we wilfully rush out of these ways, and dare presumptuously to throw ourselves upon God's miraculous interposition. And Satan not only mutilated the text, but he also took care not to give the end of the quotation, *viz.*, “Thou shalt tread upon the lion and the adder, the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.” (Ps. xci. 11) Without a close and particular knowledge of the word of God, Satan's temptations are imminently perilous to our souls. The shield of faith is faith in the divine promises and statements; and our only defensive weapon is the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. Finally, Christ's temptations and victory ought generally to console us when tempted. When we approach the holy place, we should not forget that our Great High Priest being once tempted, as we now are, knows how to sym-

pathise with, and to succour those who are tempted. Our blessed Head has overcome the Wicked One. By a careful imitation of his example, we shall be enabled always to "triumph in Christ."

Feb. 19

ANGELS MINISTERING TO CHRIST.

Angels came and ministered to him. — Matt. iv. 11.

THERE is not a great deal said in scripture concerning angels. We learn however, that they were created before our world, for when the foundations thereof were laid, "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted aloud for joy." (Job, xxxviii. 7.) We also learn that they are beings possessed of amazing power and knowledge, are astonishingly swift in their movements, are spotless, and holy, and dwell in the glorious palace of God, that they are constantly and perfectly happy. They have often been employed in performing services for our world, and they are the appointed guardians of the people of God. We frequently find them engaged in matters connected with the Redeemer. They announced his conception, they proclaimed his birth, and now, after his severe conflict with the Devil, they "came and ministered to him." Doubtless they had watched the whole scene, and how must they have rejoiced

when they beheld the wicked one effectually repulsed. But it was not until the victory was achieved that they visibly drew near. Christ's work was to be accomplished by his own arm—his triumphs were to be effected by his own power. It is not said how they ministered to Jesus. The appearance of these holy sons of light would of itself yield comfort to the Saviour. To find himself surrounded by those celestial beings who took so deep an interest in all that concerned his Father's glory. Some have supposed that they brought food to Jesus — whether that was the case or not, we cannot tell; but one thing we know, that they came and ministered unto him. And we are satisfied that they ministered to him under divine direction, that they ministered to him in the most desirable and efficient manner. And is not this passage calculated to impress with the greatest force upon our minds, other passages which relate to the communications subsisting between angels and the church of God. Let the reader carefully peruse the following portions of scripture, and derive from them all that comfort on this subject, which they are so eminently calculated to communicate. — Ps. xxxiv. 7., xci. 11. Mat. xviii 10. Heb. i. 14., xiii. 22.

Feb. 20.

CHRIST IN THE SYNAGOGUE.

And he came to Nazareth where he had been brought up, and as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath-day.—Luke iv. 16.

EVERY part of Christ's life is deserving of our particular attention. Every part that is revealed is left for our instruction, direction, and comfort. After his baptism and temptation, he returned into Galilee, in all the power of that Spirit which had wholly rested upon him, and his fame went through all the region round about. Then it is recorded that he came to Nazareth, the residence of his youthful years, where he had been brought up, and where all the people must have been well acquainted with all his history up to this period. During his residence, he had regularly attended the service of the synagogue; for it is said, "he went into the synagogue, as his custom was." It is not derogatory to Christ to suppose that it was by his attendance here that he obtained so complete a knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, one leading part of the service consisting in the reading of the word of God. And now that he was possessed of the fullness of the Spirit, he still honors the place where his Father is worshipped, and the law and the prophets read; thus establishing his own declaration, that he was not come to destroy the law, or the prophets, but to fulfil them. It was the sabbath

day when Christ appeared in the synagogue; thus at once he honoured both the day and the institutions connected with it. Though after his resurrection his disciples ever met on the first day of the week, yet up to that period Jesus paid the most marked respect to the seventh day, which had been the hallowed sabbath from the foundation of the world. Should we not learn from Christ's conduct on this occasion, to prize the sabbath and the institutions of the Lord's house? There is no plea which can reasonably excuse us from these duties. We cannot be so wise and holy as Jesus was, we have not the same resources which he had; and yet, great and glorious as he was, he went into the synagogue, and mingled with the worshippers on the sabbath day. And the Redeemer's subsequent history will prove how deeply concerned he was in all that related to the house and worship of God. Whenever we are disposed to be indifferent to divine worship, let Christ's holy example stimulate us, so that we may never forsake the house of our God.

Feb. 21.

CHRIST'S FIRST TEXT.

And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias; and when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, the Spirit of the Lord is upon me, &c.—Luke iv. 17.

ISAIAH predicted very largely concerning the person, work, and glory of Messiah. And now the

Messiah honours Isaiah, by selecting from his roll of prophecy, the subject of the first gospel discourse which he delivered in our world. (See Is. lxi. 1-2.) In doing this, the Redeemer exhibits himself on this occasion, as the end and completion of that prediction, "for this day" says he, "is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." The subject of his discourse presents before us, I.—*His divine qualifications.* "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;" that Spirit by which the holy men of old wrote and spake, the only source of inspiration, was given to the Redeemer at his baptism, and more wholly rested upon him. By it, his miraculous conception was effected. By it he was anointed to accomplish all the work of human redemption. Hence he taught by the Spirit, and wrought miracles by the Spirit, and offered himself an eternal and acceptable sacrifice through the Spirit. His kingdom was a spiritual kingdom, and the chief blessings which he came to bestow, were spiritual blessings. II.—The subject of his discourse embraced also, *the great blessings and glorious benefits, which he came to bestow.* He came to bring the gospel to the poor. The system of salvation is admirably adapted to the poor; they stand greatly in need of it; they can clearly understand it; though poor, they may obtain it, as it is without money and without price. The poor are chiefly those who believe it; and all must be possessed of spiritual poverty before they can receive it. Yes, the gospel is preached to the poor; and

in that gospel, there is an offer of dignity to them, and they become the exalted sons of God; there is an offer of costly raiment, even the best robe, the wedding garment, the garments of salvation; there is an offer of plentiful provision, even the fattened calf, the bread of life, and wine on the lees, well refined. In the gospel, they become heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, and heirs of eternal glory. Is it possible for better news, for more joyous tidings to be preached to the poor? Then let this gospel be attentively heard, and confidently believed, that all its present and future riches may be ours for ever.

Feb. 22.

PART II.

CHRIST'S FIRST TEXT.

He hath sent me to heal the broken hearted.—*Luke iv. 18.*

CHRIST not only came to preach the gospel to the poor, but also to heal the broken hearted. A sight of sin in its extreme evil, is directly calculated to produce affliction of conscience, and brokenness of heart. When David felt his sin, he experienced this state of mind, and in hope exclaimed, “a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.” When the poor woman who was a sinner felt this, her tears were so abundant, that she washed the feet of the Redeemer with them, and

wiped them with the hair of her head. When the publican felt this, he exclaimed, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Now Christ alone can cure the disease of a broken heart. He alone can pour in the healing and restoring oil of his grace. How effectually was the heart of David healed, so that he could exclaim, "as far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." (Ps. ciii. 12.) With what comfort must the woman have been blessed, when Jesus said unto her, "thy sins are forgiven." (Luke vii. 18.) And of the poor and trembling publican, it is said, he went down to his house justified. Now Jesus heals the broken hearted with his precious word, as it is said, "he sent his word and healed them." This word contains the revelation of the soul's grand catholicon, Christ's infinitely efficacious blood, which cleanseth from all sin. And by the divine agency of the blessed Spirit, this word is manifested to the understanding, and this blood is applied to the heart. By Moses and the law, is the knowledge of sin but by Christ and his gospel only, is a remedy for broken heartedness provided. Many have bad, callous, and unbelieving hearts, and yet do not feel bitterly conscious of it.. To such, how desirable that the Spirit would convince them of their true state, by revealing in all its odiousness and guilt, the plague of their hearts. To all who are mourning on account of sin, mourning because they have looked on him whom their sins have pierced, we would say,

that in the blood of Jesus, there is an atonement with free and full forgiveness, even for the sin of shedding it.

“Stung by the scorpion sin,
My poor expiring soul,
The balmy sound drinks in,
And is at once made whole.
See there my Lord upon the tree,
I hear, I feel, he died for me.”

Feb. 23.

PART III.

CHRIST'S FIRST TEXT.

Deliverance to the Captives.—Luke iv. 18.

MAN, by reason of transgression, is the slave of Satan. Manacled and bound with his torturing fetters, he leadeth him captive at his will. This state of captivity, is of a deeply degrading character, and productive of the most aggravated misery. To deliver us from this galling yoke, and free us from the power of the devil, was one great end of the manifestation of the Son of God. The captivity from which Jesus frees us, involves both body and mind. It is a captivity, from which no created power can rescue us. Captivity, which will finally consign its unhappy subjects to the blackness of final despair, and the remediless confinement of an

eternal world. Jesus is the great Deliverer; he possesses illimitable power; he can bind the spoiler, and rescue from his malignant grasp, the subjects of his oppression. The devils trembled, and confessed Jesus in the days of his flesh; and in spite of all their malignant obstinacy, were compelled to yield up their prey at his demand. It matters not, as to the nature or duration of this captivity; Jesus by his word can make us free. And to secure this deliverance, a believing appeal to Christ is all that is necessary. He waits to be gracious, and if the cry of misery assails his ear, he will prove himself mighty to save. By the energy of his truth, every fetter will be dissolved, and whom the Son makes free, they are free indeed. Being made free from sin, they have their fruit unto holiness, and the end, everlasting life.

“Jesus the sinner’s fetter breaks,
And bruises Satan’s head,
Power into strengthless souls he speaks,
And life into the dead.”

Feb. 24.

PART IV.

CHRIST’S FIRST TEXT.

And recovering of sight to the blind, &c.—Luke iv. 18.

CAPTIVES were often deprived of their sight, by their cruel oppressors, and sometimes placed in close

and solitary confinement. This was the case with Zedekiah. (2 Kings xxv. 7.) Now in this the sinner's condition is strikingly portrayed and exhibited. The sinner is a captive deprived of sight, the God of this world having blinded his eyes. He is a prisoner, bound with torturing fetters and chains. Jesus not only brings us out of captivity, but he sets the soul at perfect liberty. All the powers of the soul are disenthralled, and they enjoy all the freedom of the sons of God. Jesus also confers what no earthly conqueror could bestow, even eyesight to the blind,

“He saves from dark'ning scales of vice,
And clears the inward sight,
And on the eyeballs of the blind,
He pours celestial light.

In addition to all this, Christ introduces the acceptable year of the Lord; that is, the year of spiritual Jubilee. The ancient Jubilee was intended to be a shadowy representation of better things. The entire substance we have in the Gospel. Christ introduced this year. His advent formed the glad morning of that joyous era. Now is proclaimed a universal rest from all the toils and burdensome observances of the Levitical economy. Now is the grand opening of the prison doors to them who are bound. Now the poor are surrounded with an overflowing abundance of good things. Now the joyful sound of gospel trumpets is heard throughout the

land; and now a better Eden, and a more glorious paradise is presented, in place of those possessions we had forfeited by transgression. This acceptable year Jesus proclaimed. And by his authority, and in his name it is still preached, and shall be so, until this gospel has been published to all nations throughout the world, and then shall the end come. What spiritual happiness and joy, this subject should produce in our hearts. Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound.

Feb. 25.

CHRIST'S BENEVOLENT LIFE.

Who went about doing good.—Acts. x. 38.

How very applicable is this sentence to the whole of Christ's active life. How diligently, and with what perseverance did he carry on the great work which he came to perform. And that work was one of active goodness, one of entire philanthropy to our miserable race. In Jesus was goodness embodied; and from him it constantly flowed. It manifested itself in a thousand forms, according to the scenes of misery which were presented before him. Miracles of the most astounding character were wrought, and they were all miracles of goodness and compassion. He gave sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, speech to the dumb, feet to the lame, power to the weak, and health to the sick. He fed the hungry, cleansed lepers, cured

palsies, he banished fevers, expelled devils, allayed storms, and raised the dead. He did not forget in his benevolent career, the maladies of the mind, the misery of the soul. He shed a flood of light on all things connected with the immortal interest of the soul. Spiritual gloom fled before him, as the mists before the rising orb of day. He communicated comfort to the distressed, he became the friend and companion of the poor, he forgave their sins, and received into his society and confidence, publicans and sinners. He wiped away the tear of misery from the eye, and filled the heart with joy and gladness, and abiding consolation and peace. He opened before the minds of the people a door of hope, in the valley of Achor, a passage to a blessed immortality. In doing good he was no respecter of persons, or times, or places. His energy never failed, his compassion never subsided. And he "went about" doing good. He sought out the poor, and wretched, and miserable, and went from city to city, and from village to village, scattering on every side, and in every place, the profusions of his compassion and love. At last, after bestowing unnumbered benefits on our world, he gave his own life, and died in the place of the transgressors, that he might thus obtain for us remission of sins, and eternal glory. Let Christ's life be the subject of our constant meditation, and let it be our daily ambition to imitate the blessed Jesus, "who went about doing good."

Feb. 26.

CHRIST A SERVANT.

I am among you as he that serveth.—Luke xxii. 27.

CHRIST possessed in himself all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. By him all things consist; and before his great and lofty throne, all the intelligencies of glory, worship and adore. How deeply humiliating then, must that station appear, which the Saviour cheerfully assumed for us men, and for our salvation. He became a man, a poor man, a man despised and rejected; yea, he became the servant of man, was with us, “as he that serveth.” Christ’s whole life, was one prolonged scene of servitude. He was emphatically Jehovah’s servant, and to honour and glorify him, was his great delight, his meat and drink. But he was also the servant of man; and he was found constantly ministering to his necessities. He served man by his daily instructions, communicating the knowledge of life and salvation. In word and doctrine, he laboured with incessant care and toil. Look at the numerous sermons and parables which he delivered to the people. Then he served amongst us by the exercise of his miraculous powers, constantly going about doing good, healing the sick, restoring the blind, and making the hearts of the wretched and miserable to dance for joy. As a servant he displayed the greatest possible cheerfulness and delight. His

whole soul rejoiced in ministering to the children of men. As a servant, he was distinguished for faithfulness and constancy. He never turned aside from his work; and at all seasons, and in all places, he was amongst us, as one that serveth. Then as a servant he was distinguished for great humility and self-denial. Consider the disparity between him that served, and those to whom he ministered. It was dignity serving the degraded; Greatness serving the low; the King serving, not only his subjects, but rebels. It was the God of heaven, serving the creatures of earth. As a servant, he was ever meek and lowly; when reviled and calumniated, he either was silent, or opened his lips to pronounce blessings on his revilers. What a model for Christian imitation. How un-christ-like to seek great things for ourselves; to seek a preeminence over our brethren. In love, we should serve one another, and bear one another's burdens; and thus fulfil not only the law, but also copy the example of Christ.

Feb. 27

CHRIST THE FRIEND OF PUBLICANS AND SINNERS.

A Friend of Publicans and Sinners.—Matt. xi, 19.

THIS was the charge the Jews brought against Jesus. John, they had despised, because of the austerity of his manners; and Jesus, who practised no

such austerities, but freely mingled with the people, is hated and rejected, because he was the friend of publicans and sinners. If they intended the charge to include Christ's indifference to the conduct of the ungodly and profane, it was utterly false; it was an impious and wicked libel. Jesus hated sin, he abhorred the very appearance of evil. He never gave countenance to the least impropriety, much less to the glaring transgressions of men. But if they meant he did not sympathise with them in their pharisaical pride, that he did not despise and hate the sinner; then they uttered a truth, a truth conferring the greatest lustre on Christ's character; and a truth forming a strong basis for the hopes of the unworthy children of men. Jesus was the friend of publicans and sinners. He came from heaven to visit them, to open their eyes, and to exalt them from all the ruinous and debasing influences of sin. The leprosy of iniquity, had spread itself entirely over the whole system; and as the great physician, he went among his diseased patients, administering unto them the balm of health and life. He was the friend both of their bodies and souls; he came to heal the one, and to save the other. He was the friend of all the publicans and sinners; he did not despise the poorest, nor reject the vilest of them, from the fifty, to the five hundred pence debtor; he freely forgave all who came unto him. His friendship to sinners was of the most expensive character. It cost him all that is included in leav

ing heaven, and its riches, and its joys, and its glories; and all that is comprehended in becoming a man, an unparalleled sufferer, and an atoning sacrifice. And Jesus is still the friend of publicans and sinners. Amidst all the changes he has experienced in leaving the cross for a throne, in leaving Golgotha for Paradise, he is still the compassionate friend of the sinner, and whosoever cometh unto him he will in no wise cast out.

Feb. 28.

CHRIST THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

I am the light of the world.—*John viii. 12.*

LIGHT is one of the most beautiful creatures which God has created, and one of the most striking images of his glorious self. It is a fine emblem of the purity of his character, and of his boundless knowledge. Whatever glories belong to the Father, belong also to the Son. The Apostle says, "God is light, and in him dwelleth no darkness at all." (1 John i. 5.) Jesus here claims the same glorious distinction, and says, "I am the light of the world." The world was in darkness and ignorance. Ignorance covered the earth, yea gross ignorance the hearts of the people. Chaotic gloom brooded over the minds of all mankind. To dispel this, was one grand design of Messiah's appearance. Hence he was predicted as the Morning Star, and the Sun of

righteousness who should arise upon our world, with healing in his wings. Thus he did appear, and by the glorious doctrines of his gospel, brought life and immortality to light. He made manifest man's state, and peril, and helplessness, and also revealed the only way, by which he might be delivered from perishing, and obtain everlasting life. The world was in the darkness of *uncertainty*. As men by mere natural wisdom could not find out the true character of God, neither could they obtain any certain ground of hope as to their future destiny. All before them was dark and gloomy, not a ray was thrown across the profound futurity. Christ became the *light of hope* to the world. He assured men that there was another, and a better world; and he laid a solid basis for all their hopes to rest upon respecting it. He positively declared, whosoever received him as the sent of the Father, should have eternal life, that where he was they should be also. As the consequence of ignorance and uncertainty, the world was in the darkness of *wretchedness*. Men possessed no solid good; they had nothing to cheer in life, nothing to comfort in affliction, nothing to support in death. Christ became the *light of peace and joy*. He came to annihilate the distressing fears of the heart, and to give peace and joy in the Holy Ghost; he came to illumine the mind, to sanctify the soul, to console the heart. How glorious is Christ as the light of the world; how universal his resplendent beams! What knowledge,

and hope, and felicity, arise from his heavenly rays; how anxious we should be, that we be found, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, and thus that we be changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.

March 1.

CHRIST THE LIFE OF MEN.

*In him was life, and the life was the light of men.—
John i. 4.*

IN Jesus, as the divine Son of God, every glory and excellency are combined. He is the fountain of all good, the source of all blessedness. Existence itself, without which there can be no consciousness, dwells essentially in Christ. He is the depository of life—from him and by him all things exist, whether they be things in heaven or things on earth. His existence alone is underived—he had life in himself. In him it was as water in the channels of the sea, or as light in the sun, or as heat in the element of fire. The world, therefore, derived its being from him; for without him was not anything made that was made. So that what the heathen poet said is only true, when applied to Christ. We are his offspring, for “in him we live and move, and have our being.” The preservation of life is derived from him—he upholdeth and directeth all things—he hath the keys of life and of

death. But the world was dead—dead in trespasses and sins—dead to God—dead to holiness—dead by law—and exposed to eternal death. Christ came to awaken, to resuscitate it; he came to repeal the sentence of death, and to give the hope of life. He came that, by dying, he might redeem the world from death, and that men might have life through his name. He came that he might breathe into these dry bones the breath of life, and that they might become alive to holiness, to God, and to salvation. Thus both natural and spiritual life are in Christ, and can be only derived from him. Also, life everlasting is in Christ. Spiritual life is the germ of eternal life—"He that believeth in Christ hath everlasting life."—He has it in its beginning and first-fruits here, and he shall have it, in its consummation and unbounded fulness in the world to come. Thus Christ is the life of the world. And there is life in none other. Men have it not in themselves. They have it not in philosophy, in science, in learning, or in systems of human religion; neither have they it in the law of Moses. But Christ says (and happy is the man who believeth it) "I am come that ye might have life, and **have** it more abundantly."

March 2.

THE ZEAL OF CHRIST.

The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.—John ii. 17.

CHRIST had just expelled the buyers and sellers from the temple, by whom that hallowed place had been made a den of thieves. Immediately after this occurrence his disciples remembered that it was written “the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.” (Ps. lxxix. 9.) Zeal signifies fervour of soul, an ardent and vehement pursuit of any object. Christ ever displayed this spirit. There was never any thing listless, cold or formal about him. His whole soul was absorbed in the work which he came to fulfil. This zeal was in him as a flame continually burning, and it never was extinguished, until as the sacrifice for human guilt, he was consumed by it. At twelve years of age he evidenced it when reasoning with the doctors in the temple. At his baptism he manifested it when he came three days journey to be baptized of John. Amidst all his labours he displayed it, hence poverty, weariness, and toils never damped his holy ardour. Amidst the most cruel neglect, from those he came to benefit, amidst all the scorn and reproach that was heaped upon him, his zeal still burned with extinguishable flame. His zeal regarded the purity of the law, and his holy soul was indignant at the false glosses and corruptions of the scribes and pha-

risees. His zeal regarded his Father's glory, and hence he invariably reprov'd sin wherever he saw it. And it was thus, that he said to those who were polluting the temple,—“It is written my house shall be called a house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves.” He was zealous for the happiness and salvation of man. Hence he went about doing good. Hence also he longed for the baptism of his sufferings, intense and dreadful as he knew they would be, that a guilty world might have preached unto them repentance and remission of sin. And now elevated as he is at the right hand of the Majesty on high, he is still zealously carrying on his mediatorial schemes, and will do so until his reign is universal, and his enemies are made his footstool. How it becomes us to possess a similar glowing spirit of holy fervent zeal. How intimately connected will it be with our progress in divine things,—with our true happiness,—and with our real and extensive usefulness to the church and to the world. It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing.

March 3.

THE TENDERNESS OF CHRIST.

A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench.—Matt. xii. 20.

THIS is a part of one of Isaiah's prophecies respecting the Messiah. How admirably it was re-

alized in the spirit of the Redeemer must be manifest to every reader of his holy life. It was fulfilled to the very letter; for every act of the blessed Saviour's life evinced how tenderly concerned he was for human happiness; and how evident that a bruised reed he would not break, nor quench the smoking flax. A reed is a thing remarkable for its weakness, and is easily crushed and broken. A bruised reed seems unworthy of attention, and only fit to be trodden under foot of men. Smoking flax probably refers to a light made of that material, which is nearly consumed, flickering, and ready to expire. Now such is the tenderness of Jesus, that the most frail, imperfect, and apparently worthless of men, who resemble the bruised reed, he will not despise, and when there is the smallest evidence of desire, though but as the smoking flax, he will not extinguish or neglect it. The sigh of the broken heart he will hear, and the groan of the contrite spirit he will not despise. And how many striking illustrations of this he gave us in the days of his flesh. Behold his conduct towards his disciples.—Notwithstanding all their weaknesses and frailties, how tenderly he loved them—how meekly he corrected them, when they did not watch with him for one hour in the Garden—how mildly he upbraided them, at the same time apologizing for them, saying, “the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak—how he stipulated for their freedom, when he was arrested by the soldiers; and having loved

them amid their manifold defects, he loved them unto the end. Let us derive encouragement from this view of the Redeemer's character. And let us also study him as our great model, that we also may possess the tenderness of Christ.

March 4.

CHRIST REJECTED OF MEN.

Rejected of Men.—Isaiah liii. 3.

SEVEN hundred years before Christ's appearance in our world, was this prediction delivered; and how literally it was fulfilled, all his history testified. He came unto his own, but his own received him not. Prophets had been rejected and put to death, and at last the Son was sent, if peradventure they might reverence him. But so far were they from reverencing him, that all their hate and malevolence were directed against him. They rejected his claims; he professed to be the Messiah, but they counted him an impostor, and treated him as such. He professed to be imbued with the Spirit of God, but they said he was mad, and had a devil. They rejected his credentials, and never were credentials so clear, so full, so demonstrative. He taught what had never before been taught; he revealed what had been involved in deepest mystery; he spake as never man spake, and lived as never man lived: he

performed the most astounding miracles; all nature bended before the fiat of his word. Seas, and storms, and tempests, and diseases, and death, and devils, all felt the divinity of his presence. All, all felt and owned him, except men; men, whose nature he had assumed, whose salvation he came to secure. His gospel was rejected, his message was treated with contempt; he offered pardon, but they despised it; he offered a kingdom and a crown, but they said, "this is the heir, let us kill him." And to the last moment of his life, did they reject the Son of God and his gospel against themselves. He was rejected by all classes of men. Some few of the rich were attached to him, but the great majority of them, with the priests and rulers bitterly despised him. Some of the poor were found following him, but the bulk of the people joined in the last clamour, "away with him, crucify him, crucify him." While we feel indignant at the treatment Jesus met with from the Jews, let us remember, that Christ is still rejected by all who refuse to believe, and obey him.

March 5.

THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST.

Christ's Sufferings.—1 Pet. iv. 13.

It was a very prevalent idea among the heathen, that men suffered in proportion to their crimes.

Hence, when the viper fastened on the hand of Paul, they who beheld it at once condemned him, as a murderer, whom vengeance would not suffer to live. Had this doctrine been true, Christ never would have been a sufferer, for he was holy, harmless, and separate from sinners. Yet it is a fact, that of all sufferers, he was the most distinguished, and the most illustrious. His sufferings are among the leading topics of revelation. All the sacrifices under the law, prefigured them. All the prophets testified before hand of his sufferings, and the glory which should follow. Among the various subjects on which Jesus spake to his disciples and to the people, his sufferings often had a striking place. When he was transfigured on the mount, and there was a conversation between him, and Moses, and Elias, they spake of the decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. After his death and ascension into heaven, his sufferings formed the leading theme of apostolic preaching. Peter preached that Jesus to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, whom they had hanged on a tree. Paul determined to know nothing among men, but Jesus and him crucified. And he gloried in nothing, save the cross of Christ. And there is still no other ground of hope to the sinner, no other basis of Christian confidence, than that which is afforded by the sufferings of Christ. The Christian in all his approaches to God, in all his services, especially in all his prayers, must have the eye of faith fixed on the

sufferings of Christ. And when faith shall be turned into sight, when we shall worship him in the purer regions of the celestial paradise, the grand subject of our eternal contemplations, the burden of the songs of the heavenly Zion, will be, "Unto him who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, to him be glory and dominion for ever." Ten thousand times ten thousand, shall all join in the grand anthem, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." Then Christ's sufferings cannot fail to interest the true believer. Let it be the subject of our prayerful meditations. Let our souls dwell upon it, until we are inflamed with love to the sufferer: until we feel with experimental assurance, that we are crucified with Christ, and that the life which we now live, is a life of faith in the Son of God, who loved us and gave himself for us.

March 6.

THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST.

PART II.

Christ's sufferings,—1 Pet. iv. 15.

HAVING in the former exercise reflected upon the important place Christ's sufferings occupy in the system of divine revelation, let us now try to ascertain in what those sufferings consisted. In

what, and from whom did Jesus suffer? Christ suffered from the poor and lowly rank in society which he occupied. Had he become an earthly prince, even then his humiliation would have been great; but he left the highest seat in heaven, and took the lowest seat on earth: he became a poor man,—the servant of servants, so poor that he had not where to lay his head. Thus, from the very nature of these circumstances, in which he voluntarily placed himself, he had to endure hunger, and thirst, and toil, and weariness, and often after the hard fatigues of the day, the mountain became his closet of retirement, and the cold earth his only pillow. On one occasion, we find him happy in being able to repose himself in a cold, comfortless fishing boat, that, after a day's incessant toil, exhausted nature might obtain the balmy restorative of sleep. O yes, there is a great depth of truth in that passage—"he became poor!" Then the Redeemer also suffered from the vile aspersions which were thrown upon his spotless character. His soul was as a pure mirror, which reflected all the glories of the Godhead. In him virtue was embodied: yet his reputation was blackened; his name was associated only with evil; his claims were denied; his credentials were despised; he was accounted the enemy of the nation, an impostor, a deceiver, or else they said "he hath a devil and is mad." His discourses were reckoned seditious, and his doctrines subversive of the laws of Moses. His purity of character was

not only suspected, but he was placed upon the same list and treated with the same contempt as were the chief of the publicans and sinners. They hated him with the most imbibittered and virulent hatred, although it was entirely without a cause. This feeling increased until his life was worthless in their sight, and then they took counsel together how they might put him to death. What a picture of human blindness ! What an exhibition of human depravity ! And yet is not every sinner constantly re-acting the same scorn, the same rejection, the same persecution of the Saviour ? Let the subject lead us to search our own hearts, lest we should be found among those who are the despisers of Christ, and finally participating in their condemnation and doom.

March 7.

THE BETRAYAL OF CHRIST.

And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray him unto them.—Matt. xiv. 10.

IN the transaction stated in this passage, we have a sad exhibition of the depravity of human nature, and the total callousness of the heart of man. Here are three distinctions of character placed before us. I.—There is Jesus, the subject of this betrayal ; a person, whose life was of the most open and public

description; who did nothing in secret; who might be found every day delivering his doctrines in the streets of their city; a person who had exhibited a perfectly holy and spotless life; who had conferred unnumbered blessings on the people; whose miracles proclaimed him the expected Messiah — the true Son of God; against whom no tongue could speak truly and lay anything to his charge. II.— There are the Chief Priests. — Men whose office was of a sacred character: men who ought to be distinguished for integrity, for candour, for goodness, and for compassion. Yet these men are secretly conspiring to take away the life of Jesus; and ready to purchase the precious blood of the Lord's anointed. III. — Then there is Judas. — One of the twelve apostles of Christ's kingdom; who had received one of the highest offices from Christ that man ever held; who had been with Christ, as his disciple, as his friend: who had heard his heavenly discourses, witnessed his holy life and blessed temper: and who had seen his splendid acts of miraculous power and unbounded benevolence. Yet this individual is found with the chief priests, covenanting for thirty pieces of silver—£3, 15s. — the price of a slave, to sell unto them his friend and Lord. What a dreadful transaction! How dearly were those pieces of silver earned! It was a bargain which cost him all his heart's peace; which cost him the overwhelming horror of

total despair; which cost him unutterable and intolerable anguish and agony of soul, and a dreadful eternity. How reflection upon it, should lead us to cultivate a holy jealousy over our own hearts, that we rest not in a mere profession of religion, but that we possess within us the life and power of true godliness. How carefully, too, we should guard against covetousness—the cursed soul-destroying love of gold: a lust which induced Judas to sell his Saviour, and risk his soul's eternal welfare. It may be just added, that the psalmist had given a striking prediction of it, and thus this is one of the many proofs that Jesus was the Christ, to whom gave all the prophets witness.

March. 8.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

The Lord's Supper.—1 Cor. xi. 2.

THIS interesting and standing ordinance of Christ's church was instituted by the Redeemer, on the last night of his suffering life on earth. That night wherein he was to be delivered into the hands of enemies, by whom he was to be condemned and put to death. Surrounded by his disciples, he took bread, and gave it unto them, as a striking memorial of his body, now about to be offered for sin; and then he took wine—a striking emblem of his own precious blood—and desired them all to drink

of it, as being the blood of the new testament, shed for the remission of sins. As if he had said, "I came to bequeath the life and salvation to the world. The blessings included in this salvation are all contained in the gospel, which is the revelation of my will to mankind; but as it is necessary that where there is a testament there must also of necessity be the death of the testator, I am now about to ratify and to seal that testament with my life. This bread therefore, is the emblem of my body, which is about to be covered with scars and wounds. This wine is the emblem of my blood about to be shed for the remission of sin. And this ordinance I appoint for the commemoration of this event: and on all future occasions, when my body shall be far removed from you, do this in remembrance of me." How very affecting must this scene have been to all the parties connected with it. The disciples must have felt unutterable grief at the prospect of being deprived of their Lord and Master: and Jesus had now fully before him the sorrows of that gloomy night wherein he had to drink the bitter cup, and wherein he should be called to lay down his life as a sacrifice for the sins of the world. This ordinance has peculiar claims upon the constant and affectionate regards of all true believers. It is an ordinance wherein we have the closest fellowship with Christ, and the most intimate communion with one another. Here we partake of Christ's flesh and blood, and feed upon it by faith.

And here the Lord's friends are one *Bread*. All partakers of the same grace, enjoy the same *Spirit*, possess the same hope of beholding together the king in his beauty, and dwelling together in the bond of indissoluble fellowship in the land that is far off. Then let us ever be found at this ordinance, with hatred to sin, with genuine contrition of heart, with faith in Christ's blood, with ardent love to Jesus, and with fervent charity towards all men, and thus let us shew forth Christ's death till he come.

March 9.

CHRIST IN THE GARDEN.

Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane.—Matt. xxvi. 36.

CHRIST, when he had finished his last supper, immediately went out into the Mount of Olives. Near this mount was the garden of Gethsemane; the name signifies a press for olives. It has its situation at the foot of that fruitful mountain. An excellent writer has the following interesting and beautiful observations on the subject:—"Beholding our lord retire to this garden, on this solemn night, the last he spent on earth, our minds are filled with the solemnity of the scene. The brook Kedron, over which he passed, is supposed to derive its name from the cedars that overshadowed

it, though others, with more probability, derive it from the darkness of the shade created there by the surrounding vegetation. It has been said, and its situation with regard to the temple confirms the assertion, that the blood of the victims slaughtered at the foot of God's altar flowed into that brook so that, in passing it, Jesus might see the moonbeams reflected from the crimson stream, which, as it murmured along the valley, called to the Saviour's mind the blood that would shortly burst from his heart, which should be offered up a sacrifice for our sins." * The place of the Saviour's agony, being a garden, is calculated to remind us that the fall of man and the ruin of our race took place in a garden. In Eden the First Adam sinned: in Gethsemane the Second Adam made his soul an offering for that sin. By the sin of the First Adam we lost the terrestrial Eden, the paradise on earth; by the sufferings of the Second Adam, Eden is retrieved, we have paradise regained, and free access to the tree of life, which is in the midst thereof.

“ In a garden man was placed,
Meet abode for innocence,
With his Master's image graced;
Sin crept in and drove him thence,
Through the world a wretch undone,
Seeking rest and finding none.

* Bennett's Lectures, vol. ii, 332

In a garden on that night,
When our Saviour was betrayed,
With what world-redeeming might
In his agony he prayed !
Till he drank the vengeance up,
And with mercy filled the cup."

J. MONTGOMERY.

While we mourn over sin which expelled us from the earthly Eden, let us exercise faith in the efficacy of Christ's suffering in Gethsemane, and joyfully hope for the final possession of the Paradise above the skies.

March 10.

CHRIST'S AGONY.

And being in an agony.—Luke xxii. 44.

CHRIST had doubtless often spent whole nights in Gethsemane, in meditation and prayer; but on the present occasion he is found there as a sufferer. It is now to be the scene of an event unparalleled in the history of man. That scene was only witnessed by three disciples, the rest being left, most probably, in the Mount of Olives. It was witnessed by them, that, in the mouths of two or three witnesses, the whole might be established. Peter, James, and John, who were with Christ on the mount of transfiguration, and who heard the conversation respecting Christ's decease,

were the favoured attendants of Christ on this occasion. The term "agony," employed to describe Christ's sufferings is never used in any other part of the sacred writings: it signifies vehement anguish of mind overwhelming mental suffering. It is said that the blessed Jesus "began to be sorrowful," as if all the sufferings of his afflicted life were not worthy to be compared with that intensity of distress and sorrow which he now experienced. The reader may be assisted in judging of the depth of this sorrow, from Christ's exclamation on the occasion, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death." Let it be remembered that this was the language of the noble and courageous Jesus, who had been cradled in sorrow, and who was emphatically the man who had seen affliction. His present sufferings, however, infinitely exceeded all he had endured before, and forced from his patient and holy lips the passage already noticed. It is also said that the Saviour's agony was connected with great astonishment and surprise. He began to be sore amazed, although he had expected to suffer, and had been looking continually for this hour: yet, so intensely did he suffer—so heavy and overpowering was the sorrow, that it filled him with the utmost amazement. It is also said that he began to be "very heavy"—that his spirit became as it were crushed down, and all his mind became overcast with one dense cloud of afflictive gloom. Let it be remembered that Jesus endured all this when

no human hand was upon him, and that it must of necessity have arisen, not from the infliction of bodily pain, but from the more keen and sensible sufferings of his sacred soul.

March 11

PART II.

CHRIST'S AGONY.

And being in an agony.—Luke xxii. 44.

WE have already noticed some of the particulars of this astonishing event. We have referred to the place, to the company, and to some of the features of his sorrow. We now remark that Christ's agony was connected with great fear or terror. The word amazement implies this, and the Apostle expressly states, that "he feared." (Heb. v. 7.) Now when it is remembered, that Christ was truly and properly human, and that he had all our sinless weaknesses and infirmities, we shall easily conceive how Jesus would be filled with alarm, with consternation and dread, when he became the subject of such intense and unprecedented sufferings. Christ's agony was so severe, that though the Spirit was the seat of pain, yet it affected the whole man. Hence, "he sweat as it were great drops of blood, falling down to the ground." How much must that precious soul of Christ have endured, before

the crimson fluid could have been forced through his pores, so as to have marked the ground on which he was now stretched. Who can fathom the depth of this sea of suffering into which he was cast. The billows indeed did go over his precious head. Who can explain this mystery of mysteries?

“ 'Tis mystery all, let man adore,
And angel minds enquire no more.”

This agony was connected with the exercise of prayer. All Christ's acts and engagements were thus consecrated. When he was baptized, when he was transfigured, when he endured the agony, when he died, when he stood on Olivet's summit, his last act was devotional,

“ He entered heaven by prayer.”

Let it be observed too, that though he had disciples with him, yet they bear no part, they gave no assistance, and they had no fellowship with him in the sufferings of his agony. They could not even watch with him during that dreadful and sorrowful hour. In his own soul was all the sorrow concentrated, felt, and endured. Well might the poet exclaim,

“ O Lamb of God, was ever love,
Was ever grief like thine ?”

March 12.

PART III.

CHRIST'S AGONY.

And being in an agony.—Luke xxii. 44.

LET us now consider the source from whence Christ's agony arose. We have already observed that he was not enduring the infliction of bodily pain, we remark then, that *Christ's agony arose from the pressure of a world's guilt, which was now laid upon him.* He became the surety for the sinner, engaged to bear all the smart, and to endure the curse which we had justly incurred. That curse now, like a black cloud, settled over his sacred head. The vials of vengeance were now poured out upon him—the flaming sword which had slumbered for four thousand years, now awoke to smite the shepherd that the sheep might be redeemed. Yes, this is the hour when Messiah's soul was made an offering for sin—when it pleased the father to bruise him, and when the chastisement of our peace was upon him. If one sin expelled angels from heaven, and men from paradise—if the guilt of one heart will ever fill it with fear and distressing torture—what must Christ have now felt, when the iniquity of all our race was laid upon him, when he had to account and satisfy for it all. Under such circumstances, we do not wonder that he should be in “an agony !” Christ's agony arose also from the combined and

fearful attacks of the *powers of darkness*. When Christ overcame the devil, it is said that he departed for a season. This therefore was emphatically his hour. Now he directed all his fiery darts at the Son of God, and endeavoured, by taking advantage of Christ's unutterable distress, to overwhelm him with horror and despair. Jesus, who was now atoning for sin, had all its hideousness before him, and was feeling all its deadly poison drinking up his spirits, must have felt most keenly the suggestions and daring attacks of that master-spirit of wickedness. The agony of Jesus arose also from the *hidings of the divine countenance*. Sin excluded men from the light of God's face, and the enjoyment of his favour. The Substitute must therefore endure the same. He beheld in the countenance of his Father the features of stern and inflexible justice, and from his hand he received the bitter, unmingled cup of expiation. He was now treated as the sinner's days-man and substitute, and it behoved him to endure for a season all his demerit and woe. This is the Mirror in which we may behold the true character of sin — its dreadful and evil nature — its awful effects. Here, too, we learn the greatness of Christ's love, which caused him in the hour of our peril and in the day of just retribution, to give himself for us, and to die even for the ungodly.

March 13.

CHRIST'S PRAYER.

*And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly.**Luke xxii. 44.*

HAVING noticed the causes of Christ's agony, we now proceed to consider the conduct which he adopted, the course which he pursued. It is said, that "he prayed," that he prayed "more earnestly." The prayer of Christ on this occasion was, that if it were possible, the "cup might pass from him." As a man, Christ possessed a natural aversion to suffering. He did not solicit the removal of the cup however upon any ground, and without respect to any thing else, but only desired it, if his great undertaking could be effected without it. If not, he was still willing to drink it, even to its dregs. Hence we see his humble deference to the will of his Father, and his implicit and pious resignation, when he said, "nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." Let it be observed, that the prayer was offered with affectionate confidence. He addressed God as his Father. He knew that relationship was not, could not be dissolved. He knew that he had ever done those things which were acceptable in his sight, and that the Father was ever well pleased in him; and that however his wrath might be kindled against sin, that still his spotless soul, presented to him an object of the highest complacency and delight. On this occasion it is also

said, that he kneeled in prayer, until overpowered by his agony, he lay stretched prostrate on the cold earth, until the spot was crimsoned with his sacred blood. It is also said, that he prayed the "*more*" earnestly; the greater his distress, the more vehemently did he appeal to his Father, until his whole soul was as it were poured out before him. We notice finally, in reference to his prayer, that it was virtually answered. The cup itself was not taken away, but the overwhelming fear and dread were removed. Hence the passage, (Heb. v. 7.) when rightly interpreted, signifies, that "he was heard and delivered from that fear." That fear which drunk up his spirits, that distressing amazement was removed, and he was empowered to arise, and to finish his career of suffering; thus accomplishing the whole work which the Father had given him to do. We learn from this subject, the Christian's refuge in distress, the only resource in trouble, and that is prayer. Fervent believing prayer, will either remove our sorrows, or bring down into our hearts that gracious assistance, by which we shall be enabled to glorify God in our afflictions, and thus obtain a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

March 14.

APPREHENSION OF CHRIST.

And they that laid hold on Jesus led him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and elders were assembled.—Matt. xxvi. 57.

THE agony of Christ was succeeded by his ruffian-like apprehension. A band of officers, with swords and staves, were employed on the occasion, as if they had been about to apprehend a company of thieves and robbers. The sounds of noise and violence had never been heard proceeding from Christ's meek and heavenly lips. His career had been one of unchanging goodness and mercy; yet do they arrest him as though he had been an enemy both to God and man. It behoved Christ, however, to be numbered among the transgressors. The leader of this violent band was Judas, who had covenanted to deliver up his Christ and Master for thirty pieces of silver. He therefore stepped forward, and with the lips of guile said to Jesus "hail! master;" and then, with the symbol of love and friendship, he basely kissed him, and betrayed him into their hands. What a picture of human depravity! What a horrid sin is hypocrisy! What a soul-destroying sin is covetousness! John also informs us, that Christ addressed those who came to arrest him, asking them whom they sought; and that by the majesty and power of his voice, they were overawed, and fell backwards to the ground; a striking

proof of his own omnipotence and of their weakness; and also an abiding testimony of his readiness to go to death, no man having power to take away his life from him. Afterwards he allowed them to arrest him, and to bear him away to a human tribunal, although he foreknew the nature of his adversaries, and the mere mock trial that awaited him. We may learn from this subject, that there is no amount of moral excellency that can always shield us from calumny and reproach. We learn too the spirit which we should display even when we suffer wrongfully, and consider Jesus the high priest of our profession, who when he was reviled, reviled not again, and hath left us an example that we should follow his steps.

March 15.

CHRIST HEALING THE EAR OF MALCHUS.

And he touched his ear, and healed him.—Luke xxii. 51.

WHEN they came to apprehend Jesus, Peter, with his usual boldness, stepped forward, and, drawing his sword, cut off the ear of Malchus, the servant of the high priest. This unadvised and rash act was immediately censured by Christ, and a striking prediction delivered in regard to the Jews: "for, all that take the sword, shall perish by the

sword." The Jews were now availing themselves of the Roman power, a power by which they were annihilated as a nation, their temple burnt, and their city afterwards destroyed. Jesus then directed his attention to the sufferer; and though that sufferer was an enemy, he had compassion on him. He touched the ear with his omnipotent hand, and the wound was immediately healed. Thus, one of the last acts of his life was one of grace and mercy. In the midst of a rude band of soldiery, just after the intense sorrows of the garden, with death before his eyes, arrested by the sign of misery, he forgot himself for the moment, and healed the sufferer. How characteristic of Christ's person and work. Love was the leading feeling of his heart, to heal, the great business of his life. He came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them. It is obvious from this event, that Christ totally disapproves of the employment of the civil sword in defence of his religion. Christ's kingdom is not of this world. The weapons of christian warfare are not carnal, but spiritual, and sufficiently mighty through God, to the pulling down all the strongholds that are in opposition to it. The word of truth is the only sword Christ will allow his servants to wield. Legislative enactments, magisterial interference, or the angry passions of the human heart, most assuredly will injure those who employ them, as well as the church of Christ. Persecution is fire, far too unhallowed to burn on the christian altar.

Christ, by healing the ear of Malchus, has embodied and placed before us a striking illustration of his own precept, "I say unto you, love your enemies."

March 16.

DESERTION OF CHRIST.

Then all his disciples forsook him and fled.—

Matt. xxvi. 56.

IF Christ's meek and holy soul was deeply distressed by his rude and violent apprehension, he could not feel less annoyed when he found himself alone, all his disciples having forsaken him and fled. We should not have been astonished at weakness and defection characterizing some of his disciples, but we feel amazed when we read that they *all* partook of this fear, and cowardice, and guilt, and not one remained to comfort the Redeemer, and to whom he could unbosom his afflicted soul. Peter, after all his daring, followed afar off, until he was left and lost in the distance. John and James, too, who had been so highly favoured, and had, with Peter, seen such bright manifestations of his power and godhead, forsook him and fled. Jesus could truly exclaim, "I looked for comforters, and there was none." And what an occasion of wicked triumph would it give to Christ's adversaries when they beheld him, in the hour of distress, abandoned by all his disciples and friends. How verified was Christ's own prediction, "All ye

shall be offended because of me this night." The subject, whilst it excites within us holy sympathy towards Jesus, and indignation at his cowardly disciples, should also lead us to a strict personal examination. We imagine we should have done much better, displayed truer heroism, and have gone with Christ to judgment and to death. But have we never shrunk from the cross — have we never concealed our principles when exposed to the contemptuous sneer, or to the sarcastic remark of the enemies of Christ? Have we on all occasions honoured Jesus by an open avowal of our faith, and by a cheerful sacrifice of every thing inimical to his laws? Let the subject lead us to seek the constant aid of divine grace, and labour to obtain the mastery over the fear of man, which bringeth a snare. Ardent love and strong faith are the only graces that will bind us indissolubly to Jesus.

"The arms of love and wings of faith
Will bear us conquerors through."

March 17.

THE TRIAL OF CHRIST.

And they led away Jesus to the High Priest, and with him were assembled all the chief priests and elders and the scribes.—Mark xiv. 53.

HAVING witnessed the arrestment of Jesus, it now devolves upon us to notice the object they

had in view and the result which followed. Now, let us consider before whom Christ was taken for trial. They were "the high priest, and elders of the scribes," individuals who were deeply prejudiced against Jesus, who hated him and his doctrine with perfect hatred, and who were therefore totally disqualified for judging Christ impartially. Then consider for what Jesus was arrested—with what stood he charged. They wished to prove him a blasphemer against God, and an enemy to the existing civil laws. How base, how wicked the accusations! His holy, reverend deportment, his communion with God, and the most striking attestations of Divine approbation, had ever distinguished the career of Jesus. And he had ever inculcated, and exhibited by his own conduct, obedience to the powers that then were. His great maxim was, to "render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things which are God's." To prove Jesus guilty of either was therefore impossible. They were so wicked as to collect false witnesses to establish Christ's guilt—but their evidence was so contradictory that it would not hang together. At last, the High Priest solemnly adjured Christ to answer whether he was "the Christ the Son of God," or not. To this solemn question, Christ declared that he was the Christ, saying, "I am," or as St. Luke states it, "Thou sayest"—exactly what I profess to be. This, then, is the point they

wished to gain. Now they declare him guilty of blasphemy in making himself the Son of God, and the whole council immediately pronounced him worthy of death. What a scene of human malignity and blindness we behold in this ecclesiastical assembly. What an example of suffering goodness in Jesus. What a theme for pious meditation. Angels desire to look into the subject of Christ's sufferings, and are not able.

March 18.

THE INDIGNITIES OFFERED TO JESUS ON HIS TRIAL.

Then did they spit on his face, and buffeted him, and others smote him with the palms of their hands. — Matt. xxvi. 67.

It is customary, in passing sentence even on the vilest of criminals, to do so with that seriousness and solemnity befitting the occasion. But no sooner was Jesus declared guilty, and condemned to death, than all that was sacred and decent was outraged by those around him. That face, which beamed with all that was heavenly and benign, was grossly spit upon — an indignity of the very vilest description. Thus was fulfilled the prediction of Esaias, "I hid not my face from spitting." l., 6. Then also they buffeted him, and others smote him with the palms of their hands,

thus showing the exasperated state of their hearts against him. They also blindfolded him and then tauntingly mocked his prophetic office, by asking who it was that smote him. Here again we perceive a most striking fulfilment of ancient prophecy, "He giveth his cheek to him that smiteth him; he is filled with reproach."—Lam. iii. 30. Micah had also predicted that they should "smite the Judge of Israel with a rod upon his cheek."—v. 1. How exactly were these Scriptures fulfilled. How astonishing was the conduct of Jesus under these indignities. He reviled them not.—He displayed no wrath—He could easily have struck the whole with instant blindness or death.—Legions of angels at his word would have rushed to his deliverance, and revenged the insults of their Lord.—But in meekness and patience he possessed his soul, and endured all the reproaches and smitings they thought fit to heap upon him. "He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before the shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth."—Isaiah, liii. 7. What an exhibition of insulted innocency—of suffering goodness—of inconceivable compassion, that Jesus should so freely and meekly endure the temptations of Satan, the cup of unmingled wrath, and the violence of wicked men, that his very persecutors might have salvation and life through his name.

March 19.

PETER'S DENIAL OF CHRIST.

Then began he to curse and swear saying, I know not the man.—Matt. xxvi. 74.

WE have already witnessed the desertion of Jesus in the hour of his arrestment, by all his disciples. It appears however, that Peter rather lingered in the distance, followed afar off, and ultimately, went to the hall of the palace of the High Priest, doubtless, to see what would be the conclusion of the matter. Here his appearance attracted attention, and he was challenged as being one of Christ's disciples. To this he gave a sort of evasive denial, when shortly afterwards, another maid saw him and said, that he "was surely with Jesus," to this he gave a direct denial which he confirmed by an oath. A third time being charged by several of those who stood by, he manifested the most violent passion, and "began to curse and swear saying, I know not the man." Here then we perceive the blessed Saviour disowned with wicked imprecations, by one of the chief and most favoured of his disciples. Peter who had always received an especial degree of attention from Christ, who had been with him on the Holy Mount of transfiguration, who had witnessed the agony in the garden, who had seen the rude officers fall to the ground by the sound of his voice, now denies having any knowledge at all of him.

On a previous occasion he had witnessed a noble confession of Christ, he had declared his readiness to die for him, he had averred, although all men forsook him yet he never would; in the garden too, he had been precipitately ready to draw his sword, and had actually cut off the ear of Malchus, yet now he is bereft of all his courage, now all his resolutions are forgotten, and violently with iniquitous curses and oaths, denies having any knowledge of Christ. What an exhibition of human weakness! How weak and helpless are the best of men when relying on their own strength. He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool—we should pray, “Lord hold thou us up, and we shall be safe.”

“Beware of Peter’s word,
Nor confidently say,
I never will deny thee Lord,
But grant I never may.”

March 20.

PART II.

PETER’S DENIAL OF CHRIST.

Then began he to curse and swear saying, I know not the man.—Matt. xxvi. 74.

PETER’S sin and fall, were doubtless occasioned by the fear of man, which always bringeth a snare. There were however several features in his conduct

of a highly aggravated character. To deny Jesus, was of itself exceedingly sinful. To say that he did not know his blessed friend and master, who had called him from his employment as a fisherman, and who had invested him with one of the highest offices in his kingdom, was wicked and ungrateful. Not know Jesus? Why he had been his confidential attendant for years,—he had heard nearly all his discourses,—witnessed all his miracles. His own wife's mother had been restored from a fever by his healing power. He had once been snatched from a watery sepulchre by Christ's hand, when he went to meet him on the sea, and fearing, began to sink. Not know Jesus! Why only a few hours before he had supped with him at the Eucharistic table. Had received from his hands the solemn symbols of his body and blood. Yea more, he had been reminded of his fall, forewarned of the very conduct, he was now evincing. Christ had said that all his disciples should be offended that night, and that before the cock crew twice, Peter should deny him thrice. And this was the greatest aggravation of the sin, that, with the affectionate admonition of Christ still as it were sounding in his ears, through unwatchfulness, he should be guilty of it, to the very letter of the warning he had received. How deeply did he fall, when he could call Jehovah to witness to the awful falsehood. What forgetfulness of that pure example which had been so constantly before his eyes. What ungratefulness to that

precious Saviour to whom he was so deeply indebted. And what disloyalty to that royal master, to whom he had pledged himself to go, even unto death. Immediately however the cock crew, and then his criminality was brought to his recollection, at the same time the Lord turned and looked upon Peter, — a look of upbraiding kindness, — a look of pity and compassion for the poor wanderer.

“A look which brake,
Unfaithful Peter's heart.”

Immediately he went out and wept bitterly. His sin was sudden, and his repentance was direct. His sin was great, his anguish and repentance were deep and bitter. And afterwards we behold him restored to the favour of his Lord, receiving the apostolic commission from his hands, and finally sealing the profession of the gospel with his blood. “Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.” And let it be ever remembered that a “broken and a contrite heart God will not despise.”

March 21.

THE SAVIOUR BEFORE PILATE.

And led him unto Pilate.—Luke xxiii. 1.

IN leading Jesus to Pilate, the Jews have left incontrovertible evidence, that now all power had passed from them as a nation, seeing it was not

now lawful for them to put any man to death. So that the prediction of Jacob had evidently received its realization, *viz.*, that the sceptre had departed from Judah, and the lawgiver from between his feet; and therefore, if that was a true prophecy, the Shiloh had now come. In leading Jesus to Pilate, the fact and notoriety of his death, would be more extensively circulated, and more generally known. The tidings of the crucifixion of the far famed claimant of the Jewish Messiahship, would thus be conveyed through the whole length and breadth of the Roman empire. Besides, it was by Jesus dying under a Roman sentence, that he expired upon a cross, which was a capital punishment among the Romans only. As one observes, his death would have been expiatory, had he been beheaded like John the Baptist, or stoned like Stephen; but how then could the types have been accomplished, especially that of the brazen serpent; and how could the predictions of the Psalmist, in the 22nd Psalm, have been so literally and strikingly accomplished. Thus when they led Jesus to Pilate, they were fulfilling, though unconsciously, what God had foredetermined, and what prophets had foretold should come to pass. Besides, as the sequel will demonstrate, by leading Jesus to Pilate, their own wickedness and the innocency of the Saviour, became more obviously apparent. What must have been the feelings of the generous and lovely Jesus, thus to be exposed to the assembly of

the wicked; thus to be encompassed by dogs, and to be beset by the bulls of Bashan. (Ps. xxii. 12.) Yet so it was, he was abandoned by his disciples, persecuted to the death by his own nation, and now dragged before a Gentile tribunal, for the sentence to be ratified, and put into execution. How meditation on this subject, should reconcile us to calumny, to reproach, and to suffering, for his sake who thus allowed unnumbered billows of anguish to pass over him that he might finish the work of redemption on behalf of a guilty and dying world.

March 22.

THE SAVIOUR'S TRIAL BEFORE PILATE.

And they began to accuse him, saying, we found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying that he himself is Christ a King.—Luke xxiii. 2.

HAVING brought Jesus before Pilate, thereby to obtain his authority to put him to death, we certainly should expect that the crimes with which he had been charged, and the evidence by which his guilt had been proved, would have been placed before him. But instead of this, their old charge of blasphemy is abandoned. That for which they

had condemned him, is never once named. They now represent him, as "perverting the people, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar." Never was a more wicked and false charge brought against any criminal. Why, Jesus had published and acknowledged the rights of Cæsar, when the coin with his superscription, was given into his hands, and said, "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's." And so far was he from sowing sedition, and interfering with the authorities which then existed, that he ever taught, and was himself the model, of peace and goodwill to men. On one occasion, the people would fain have laid hold of him, that they might make him their king, but he escaped from them. In fact, this was the great stumblingblock to the Jew, that Christ had not come with earthly power and glory; and because they saw no probability of being delivered by him from the Roman yoke. Christ had never insinuated that he laid claim to any such authority. It was manifest that his kingdom was one within the heart, and that his empire extended only over the world of mind. If he had been an earthly king, if he had designed to usurp temporal power, then would he have raised soldiers; then he would have taught the science of war; then would he have employed his Almighty power in destroying his adversaries. But his followers were unarmed, plain, and peaceable men. His doctrine was peace, peace always, and peace to all men. His power was employed in blessing

men, by healing their maladies, and forgiving their sins

March 23.

CHRIST'S EXAMINATION BEFORE PILATE.

Then Pilate said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews.—John xviii. 33.

THE charge preferred against Jesus was that he perverted the people, wishing to alienate their affections and obedience from the civil authorities, and to claim the supremacy himself. Pilate therefore asks Jesus, "art thou a King?" Dost thou profess to be the King of the Jews? To this Jesus replies, "my kingdom is not of this world," a direct and public denial of the charge which they had brought against him. In this avowal, we are taught the true spirituality of Christ's church. Kingdoms of this world have certain geographical limits,—Christ's kingdom is destined for the whole earth.

"Jesus shall reign where'er the sun,
Does his successive journies run."

Kingdoms of this world have earthly potentates, Jesus as King was the Lord from heaven, who had never been preceded in his spiritual dominions, and who shall have no successor, for he shall reign for ever and ever. Kingdoms of this world have

earthly laws, and legislate for temporal purposes, Christ's laws are spiritual and divine, and are to be found only in the sacred volume of the holy scriptures. Earthly kingdoms have carnal weapons, and employ the sword for their defence or extension, the truth, the hallowed sword of the divine word is the only weapon Jesus ever employed, or will ever sanction in the defence or extension of his reign. Kingdoms of this world shall all finally perish in the great and general conflagration, Christ's kingdom shall exist for ever, his reign shall be everlasting, and of his dominion there shall be no end. Jesus therefore while he denied the charge the Jews brought against him, confessed himself a king, but whose kingdom was not of this world. Pilate must have perceived at once the falsity of the charge, and therefore he went out to the Jews, and said, "I find no fault in this man." Here then is high official testimony publicly borne to the innocence of Jesus.

March 24.

JESUS IN THE COURT OF HEROD.

And Herod with his men of war set him at nought and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate.—Luke xxiii. 11.

PILATE, discovering that Jesus belonged to the jurisdiction of Herod, sent him unto him, who

happened to be at Jerusalem at that time. It seems that Herod had long desired to see the far-famed Jesus, and therefore was exceedingly glad that he was now before him. Herod's desire was merely owing to curiosity, expecting that Jesus would do some miracle before him. Jesus not gratifying this desire, Herod, instead of righteously judging of the case before him, merely asked him a number of idle questions, to which the blessed Saviour answered nothing. Fearing that Herod might follow Pilate's example, the chief priests and scribes stood by, and vehemently accused Christ. What a scene of blindness and malignant infatuation! Herod's heart quite accorded with the Saviour's enemies; therefore, instead of judging Christ, it is left on record that "Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked him." "They set him at nought," that is, they made nothing of him — considered him utterly too base and worthless for their consideration. They mocked him — no doubt taunted him with his profession — ridiculed his pretensions — laughed at his claims — dared him to exert his power — treated him as a madman, and as a fool. They also arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, some old tattered robe, which formerly might have decorated royalty, they put upon his person, that he might become the public object of ridicule, contempt, and scorn. Thus it had been predicted how the kings of the earth and the rulers should set themselves against

the Lord and his anointed.—Ps. ii. 2. Jesus having patiently endured the indignities of Herod, is again dismissed, and sent to Pilate, even Herod, with all his baseness, and hatred, and scorn, finding nothing in him worthy of death.

March 25.

BARABBAS PREFERRED TO CHRIST.

Not this man, but Barabbas.—John xviii. 38.

CHRIST having been sent back to Pilate, and Herod having found nothing worthy of death in him, Pilate proposes to scourge him, and set him at liberty. This just proposal, was however violently rejected by the people, and they loudly clamoured for his death. While Pilate was on the judgment seat, deciding upon this matter, his wife sent unto him, stating how she had suffered many things in a dream on account of Jesus, and praying him to have nothing to do with that just man. (Matt. xxvii. 19.) As it was customary once a year to release one of the public prisoners, Pilate immediately appealed unto them, to give Jesus the benefit of this merciful custom, and proposes that Jesus should be released. Then cried they all again, saying, “Not this man, but Barabbas.” Now Barabbas was a robber. What an estimate must they have formed of Jesus. A violent, dangerous rob-

ber, an avowed enemy to God and man, is preferred before the holy, the heavenly, and the blessed Jesus. A destroyer of human happiness, is preferred to him, who came to bless men with all the blessings of life and immortality. An enemy to society, is preferred to the world's philanthropist. A Barabbas to Jesus ! Had they only appealed to the safety of society, was it not better for Jesus to be set at large, than one whose hands had been imbrued with the crime of murder : for Barabbas was a murderer, as well as a robber. (Luke xxiii. 19.) How would thousands of diseased and wretched beings, have rejoiced to have been introduced to Jesus, and received a place in his compassions, and have felt the exertions of his power. But he who spake as never man spake, who had wrought such miracles as had never been heard of before ; all of which were miracles of goodness and mercy, is now so despised and rejected, that a robber and a murderer is preferred before him. And they all cried, " not this man, but Barabbas." Here then we behold guilt triumphing over innocence, iniquity over justice, and devils and wicked men, over the immaculate Jesus, the Saviour of the world, the only begotten Son of God. But while we feel indignant at the wicked preference of the Jews, is there nothing to be found like it in our own history and experience. Our outrageous sins, our destroying lusts, have they not been preferred by us, to the

Holy Spirit and laws of Jesus. When he hath sought the throne of our affections, when he has waited at the door of our hearts, have we not often given the preference to our sins, and said, "not this man Jesus, but Barabbas." What genuine sorrow and deep repentance ought such a remembrance to produce. Let our indignation then, be directed against ourselves, and may the life we henceforth live in the flesh, be a life of faith in the Son of God, who loved us and gave himself for us.

March 26.

PILATE'S ATTEMPT TO CLEAR HIMSELF FROM CHRIST'S BLOOD.

He took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just man, see ye to it.—Matt. xxvii. 24.

It is obvious that Pilate sincerely desired to liberate Jesus. But alas! so far was he from having moral courage sufficient to induce him to do right at all hazards, and daring all consequences, he at last gives way, and despite of the manifest innocence of Jesus, his wife's admonitory dream, and his own public declaration, he delivers him up into the ruthless hands of his malignant murderers. Pilate had truth and righteousness on his side, he had also a military force sufficient to have put down the tumultuous mob, yet he so far forgets

his honour, and the claims of justice, that he is borne away with the clamorous demands of the people, and consents to the execution of the innocent Jesus. It is evident that the conscience of Pilate was the seat of extremely violent conflict and agitation. He saw the path of duty, but he feared to walk in it. At last, he took water and before the multitude, washed his hands, as a final symbolical declaration of Christ's innocence, and that he had no part or lot in his death. How important that so high and public a testimony was borne to the falsity of the malignant charges brought against him. Happy for all his disciples, that their Lord was thus cleared by the highest human authority from the slanderous imputations of the Jews. And happy would it have been for Pilate, if the application of water could have freed him from all blame in this matter. In giving up Jesus, he had violated the most powerful appeals of an awakened conscience, and therefore though he had washed his hands for ever he could never have obliterated a single stain. How truly wretched and pitiable was the condition of Pilate. Happy are all those who under all circumstances have moral courage to maintain a conscience void of offence both toward God and man.

March 27.

THE BLOOD OF JESUS IMPRECATED BY THE JEWS.

*Then answered the people and said, His blood be on us,
and on our children.—Matt. xxvii. 25.*

UNPRINCIPLED as was the conduct of Pilate in condemning an innocent person, yet his conduct was praiseworthy when contrasted with that of the Jews. Pilate is anxious to free himself from the blood of Jesus, the Jews seem determined hastily to fill up the cup of their iniquity, and are quite ready to bear the whole responsibility, and therefore exclaim, "His blood be upon us and upon our children." The imprecation was deeply wicked. Who would wish to stand before the spotless throne of God, with his conscience stained with human blood? Who would desire the blood of a wicked man, and that man our direst enemy, to crimson our garments in that day? But here was a holy person, a person making claims to the highest dignity, the professed Messiah, whose life had been one scene of piety to God, and benevolence to man, whom multitudes would have reason to bless to the end of life, and who had been proclaimed innocent by the judge who had heard the case, and yet they unitedly imprecate the blood of Jesus, to rest upon them and their children. With all their superior privileges, and with all their religious professions,

how they surpass in wickedness even the pagan Pilate himself. The imprecation was as unnatural as it was wicked. Why did they include their children? Was it not enough to excite the wrath of heaven against themselves, but must unborn multitudes be involved in the same crime, and be made partakers of the same curse.

March 28.

PART II.

THE BLOOD OF JESUS IMPRECATED
BY THE JEWS.

How dreadfully has that imprecation been fulfilled, and how solemnly has it been realized. Shortly after this horrid tragedy was performed, slumbering vengeance awoke, and their nation became one scene of calamity, and their whole city, one spectacle of slaughter and blood. They consigned Jesus to the Roman powers, and those very powers took away all their liberties, destroyed their city, burned their temple, and caused Jerusalem's streets to flow with human blood. They thirsted for Jesu's blood, and desired that he might die the most shameful and ignominious of all deaths—that of crucifixion; and afterwards, so many of themselves were crucified, that no more materials for crosses could be obtained. O yes,

that blood they so imprecated did come upon them, and it came upon their posterity too. For eighteen centuries has it pursued them into every part of the world, and to this day Heaven seems to point them out, as the murderers of the Son of God. And is there no possibility of obliterating these crimson stains. Shall the blood of Jesus be upon them for ever? There is one grand remedy, and *only one*. In that very blood there is an atonement for the sin in shedding it. By a cordial faith in that Jesus whom they rejected and wickedly slew, they may find redemption, even the forgiveness of sins. May the precious blood of Christ be upon their consciences, and hearts, that thro' it they may have acceptance, peace, and eternal glory.

“Most dreadful wish! Thy murderers dare
The blessing to a curse pervert,
We turn the curse into a prayer,
To cleanse our lives, and purge our heart,
In all its hallowing saving powers,
Thy blood be, Lord, on us and ours!”

March 29.

THE SCOURGING OF JESUS.

Then released he Barabbas unto them, and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.—

Matt. xxvii. 26.

PILATE, having washed his hands to vindicate his innocence from Christ's blood, and the Jews

having freely taken the entire guilt upon themselves and their posterity, then is Barabbas the murderer liberated, and the holy and blessed Jesus delivered unto death. On delivering up Jesus, he was first scourged—a punishment administered with great severity among the Romans. Behold the illustrious Jesus! Take a retrospect of the sorrows and sufferings of the first night—think of the agonies of Gethsemane—of his rude arrestment—of his mock trials—of the indignities offered to his sacred person! And now see him bound to the pillar, while the cruel lash lacerates his back, the blood profusely streaming to the ground. How exactly was the scripture fulfilled, “The ploughers ploughed on my back, they made long furrows there.”—Ps. cxxix. 3. “I gave my back to the smiters.”—Isa. l. 6. And again, “The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.”—Isa. liii. 5. In the liberation of Barabbas, we have strikingly exhibited to us the doctrine of substitution, wherein the true criminal, the real malefactor, is set free through the suretyship of the Son of God. Divine Justice cannot relax its demands—cannot yield up any of its claims: sin must be punished either in the actual delinquent or in the person of a substitute. Jesus was that blessed substitute. He receives our ignominy and our guilt upon himself—he takes the sinner’s standing-place, and suffers, the iust for the unjust, to bring us to God. In

the mirror of the Saviour's sufferings we behold the extreme evil of sin—the unparalleled love of Jesus—and the only way of a sinner's acceptance with God. Intense sorrow for sin, ardent affection for Christ, and believing confidence in the blood of the atonement, ought to be produced by a right consideration and improvement of this subject.

March 30.

JESUS DERIDED AND MOCKED.

And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. And when the soldiers had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand, and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. Matt. xxvii. 28—30.

IN most cases, notorious criminals, after sentence has been passed upon them, have excited feelings of commiseration in those around them. The officers of justice, however inured to their business of death, generally discharge their duty with seriousness and propriety. Even the surrounding rabble mostly witness the extreme sentence of the law with decency and awe. But no sooner is Jesus given up by Pilate, than every one seems desirous to vie with his fellow who shall treat the precious sufferer with greatest indig-

nity, cruelty, and contempt. Decency is totally outraged—humanity seems annihilated—pity seems to have deserted our world—malignant brutality appeared to occupy every breast. Verily, this was in truth the hour of man's wickedness, and the hour of darkness. Jesus has just been scourged—nature is nearly exhausted. Surely, they now will allow him repose and quietness, until the hour of execution. So far from this, while every wound is bleeding, he is surrounded by the cruel soldiery, who insult, and taunt, and revile, and mock him to the utmost of their power. They throw over him a scarlet robe, to make him, even in the midst of all his sorrows, an object of merriment and contempt. They place upon his heavenly brow a wreath of thorns, forcing it deeply into his temples, until his sacred face was stained with the flowing crimson. A reed is thrust into his hands as a scornful emblem of his sceptre. And then, in horrid mockery, they bend their knees before him, spitting in his face, and striking the crown of thorns deeper into his bleeding temples. Truly, Jesus was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.

March. 31.

PART II.

JESUS DERIDED AND MOCKED.

HAVING briefly glanced at the mockery and cruel indignities which Jesus endured, let us now endeavour to derive some useful lessons from it. We cannot fail to remember that it was through sin, that the curse was pronounced, by which the ground was doomed to bring forth “thorns and thistles.” Here then we behold Jesus, who voluntarily became a curse for us, bearing on his head a crown of thorns, that the curse might be removed from us. Man by transgression had become the creature of guilt, and shame, and suffering; he had lost the fair robe of Eden’s innocency, and the joyous delights of Paradise. Jesus now assumes our reproach, is covered with a mock-robe, and suffers through all his sacred person the most intense pain on our behalf. But God, in his great love, had purposed man’s restoration to himself. He destined him to become an heir of heaven—He designed for him a spotless garment and crown of glory. Here then we behold the price of our redemption. Our holiness must be obtained through Christ’s obedience and blood—our pardon through his condemnation—our robe through his scarlet apparel—our crown through his wreath of thorns—our glory through his ignominy—our happiness through his woes—and our

salvation through his cross and death. While we anticipate the possession and enjoyment of the robes and crowns, and pleasures of heaven, let us not forget the sum they cost—the immense price at which they were procured. Let Christ's mockery and derision reconcile us to suffering and reproach for his sake. If we are to participate with him in his glory, is it too much to have fellowship with him in his sufferings? "If we suffer with him, we shall also be glorified together." It is requisite, not only that we suffer with him, but that we suffer in the same spirit of meekness and mercy which he displayed.

April 1.

JESUS BROUGHT FORTH.

And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man.—John xix. 5.

AFTER Jesus had endured the cruel scourging, and still arrayed in the garments of mock royalty, Pilate attests for the last time, that he finds no fault in him, and bringing him forth before the people, exclaims, "Behold the Man." How differently was Jesus looked upon by the various spectators at this moment. Pilate beheld him as an innocent man, but took no interest in him, and allowed him to be treated as the vilest malefactor. The Jews beheld him with feelings of galling envy and malice, and with direst hate, ardently thirsted

for his blood. Devils beheld the man, and perhaps contemplated in his death, the overthrow of God's spiritual empire on earth. Angels doubtless, beheld him with wonder and affection, and longed to be the messengers of deliverance, or of comfort, to their suffering Lord. The Father beheld him and saw in the object of human scorn, his own Son, in whom all his glories were reflected, his beloved equal, his eternal delight. In this man we behold united, Divine power and human weakness, celestial glory and earthly ignominy. The fountain of happiness to all creatures, and yet the depository of unequalled anguish and suffering. In this man we behold absolute holiness, and yet by imputation, the sins of a world were laid upon him. In this man, and in him only, is to be found the "glory of Israel," and "God's salvation to the ends of the earth." In him is the hope of the penitent, the joy of believers, the King of Zion, and the Lord of Angels. O then let us draw near, and behold him with sorrow for our sins. With faith in his saving merits. With supreme love to his person. And with entire consecratedness of heart to his service. The ungodly will at last behold him, and they who set him at nought, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. (Rev. i. 7.)

April 2.

CHRIST BEARING HIS CROSS.

And he bearing his cross, went forth.—John xix. 17.

WE are now called upon to behold Jesus on his way to the place of execution. The instrument on which he was to expire is framed, and he is led forth, bearing on his shoulder, the ponderous weight of his own cross. His sufferings had been however, so aggravated and extended, that nature was unable to the task they now imposed on him, and he sank by the way. They then met one Simon, a Cyrene, and him they compelled to bear the Saviour's cross. "Cyrene was on the north part of the coast of Africa: it is likely therefore, that he was a black, who had been converted from idolatry, and had come to worship God at Jerusalem. There is a pleasing tradition concerning Simon, that while carrying Christ's cross, he was convinced of his Messiahship and Divinity, became a sincere disciple, and that two of his sons became celebrated preachers of the Gospel." However exhausted the body of Jesus might be, we know that he bore the cross cheerfully, despising the shame, that he might obtain the covenanted reward, and sit down on the right hand of the throne of God. And he who assisted him on his way to Calvary, stands as the type of every genuine disciple and servant of Jesus. Christ went from shame to dignity, from suffering to joy, from the cross to glory. As his friends, he

calleth upon us to have fellowship with him in his sufferings, and to take up his cross and follow him. "For if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him," but if we shun the cross, and deny him, he also will deny us. (2 Tim. ii. 11 i. 2)

April 3.

THE PLACE OF CHRIST'S DEATH.

Golgotha.—John xix 17.

THE place of Christ's death, was the common scene of the execution of malefactors, and hence it was called Golgotha, the place of skulls. Here lay spread abroad, the remains of those who had forfeited their lives, and died by the hands of the executioner. Golgotha strikingly exhibited the true state of that world, which Jesus came to redeem. Our fallen world is one vast Golgotha, one region of death, one extended burying ground. Divine justice had pronounced the sentence of death against all the human family, and with two exceptions, every child of the myriads of Adam's family, had felt its infliction. To save us from sin and death, was the great object of Christ's visit to our world; the grand design of his sufferings and death. No where could we behold a more striking, affecting view of our world, than in Golgotha. Golgotha was without the gates of the city, and it was thus designed to shew us, that Jesus as the great

sacrifice for sin, was not limited to the Jewish nation, but that he was an offering for the whole world. Hence all nations may claim the benefit of his death, who was crucified at Golgotha. In this way too, was Christ's death a public event, an undoubted occurrence; both enemies and friends could thus with certainty attest its reality. Then by dying here, the types and prophecies of the Scriptures were fulfilled, for it was on one of the eminences of this mountain, that Isaac had been typically slain, nearly two thousand years before. And it had also been expressly predicted by Isaiah, that "he should make his grave with the wicked, and be numbered with the transgressors." (liiii. 9—12.) Behold then, on this summit of infamy and reproach, the prince of life obtaining for us dignity and joy, Behold the place of skulls, where death seemed to sway his sceptre with bold and unlimited authority, becoming the dying place of him, who is the resurrection and the life, and who shall ultimately prove the destruction of death, and the plague of the grave. Let the subject reconcile all the friends of Jesus, cheerfully to "go forth unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach."

April 4.

THE MANNER OF CHRIST'S DEATH.

There they crucified him.—Luke xxiii. 33.

CRUCIFIXION was a Roman punishment, and was considered as only fit for the vilest of slaves and malefactors. It was therefore deemed by all, one of peculiar ignominy and shame. It was also a death of *extreme torture and agony*. "The sufferer was thrown down on his back upon the cross and his limbs were stretched to the utmost before they were fastened to the wood." Then after racking the limbs, nails, or rather spikes, were driven through the tender and sensitive parts of the hands, and it is highly probable that one large nail was driven through the crossed feet of the sufferer. Then the cross was raised in an upright position, and thrust violently into a hole prepared for the purpose, while the whole body was left sustained by the nails through the hands and feet. It was thus also that crucifixion was a most *slow* and *lingering death*. Thus suspended, the sufferer often lived for several hours, and sometimes violence had to be used to accelerate the tedious process. While we behold Jesus expiring on the cross, we are reminded of the paschal lamb, which when slain, was fixed on an instrument for the process of roasting, much in the shape of a cross, and hence the Apostle's declaration, "Christ our passover, who is sacrificed

for us." We are reminded also of the brazen serpent, of which Jesus spake, when he said, "even so must the Son of man be lifted up." Thus too, we feel a particular interest attached to that passage. "Blotting out the hand-writing which was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." (Col. ii. 14.) And finally we see a powerful reason for the Apostle's exclamation, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

April 5.

JESUS MOCKED AND REVILED ON THE CROSS.

And they that passed by, reviled him, wagging their heads, and saying, thou that destroyest the Temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, he saved others, himself he cannot save.—Matt. xxvii. 39—42.

WHEN Jesus was enduring the agonies of crucifixion, we might have presumed that the most malignant of his enemies, would have ceased to taunt and revile him. If any feeling of humanity had remained, the sight of a fellow being in the tortures

of a cruel death, would have called it forth. But to the last instant of his life, Jesus was doomed to bear the scorn of man, and his dying moments were embittered by the barbarities of his executioners, and the rude and unfeeling revilings of the hardened multitude. They taunt him with his previous pretensions, of being able to destroy and build again the temple in three days. They refer to his claims, as the Son of God, and they appeal to him as such, to come down from the cross. This was not only the cry of the multitude, but also of the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders of the people. How deplorably fallen these Fathers of religion ! How blind and infatuated these guides of the people ! No wonder that both priests and people should fall into the ditch. Had they read the prophets with prayerful attention, and humility of mind. Had they examined Christ's pretensions to the Messiahship, with candid impartiality, they would have found every sign, which purity of life, which heavenly doctrines, and which the most stupendous miracles could possibly afford. But they wilfully closed their eyes against all the evidence which heaven and earth had given ; and now whilst the sufferer was suspended on the ignominious tree, they ridicule those claims, and defy him to come down from the cross. How dreadful are the effects of ignorance and unbelief. Let us see to it, that while we condemn the Jews for their hatred to the Son of God, that we prove the genuineness of

our faith in him, by cherishing the most ardent affection to him, and by a life of cheerful and constant obedience to all his commands.

April 6.

THE SAVIOUR OF OTHERS NOT ABLE TO SAVE HIMSELF.

He saved others, himself he cannot save.—Matt. xxvii. 42.

AMONG the other things with which the chief priests and scribes taunted the Saviour on the cross, we find the sentence which heads this exercise;—"He saved others." This they might intend as the language of irony, meaning that he professed so to do, obviously implying that it was mere pretence, and that he had really never done so, seeing that he did not now save himself. The language of Jewish scorn involved, however, a most notorious truth. "He saved others." Yes, thousands could attest this: for his miracles were not done in a corner; but publicly in the light of day. "He saved others." Yes, almost all the villages of Judea had been the scenes of his benevolent and almighty power. Ye sick, did he not speak to you, and ye were instantly made whole? Ye lepers, did he not command, and ye were cleansed? Ye dumb, attest how he caused you to speak? Ye blind, know one thing at least, that Jesus caused your

sightless eye-balls to behold the light. Ye demoniacs, was it not by the power of Jesus that the spirits were dispossessed, and that ye sat at his feet, clothed and in your right mind? Where is the woman who had the bloody issue for so many years? Where is the nobleman whose daughter was raised from the bed of death? Where is the widow of Nain, who received back again from the bier her only son? Ye amiable sisters of Bethany, who led the Saviour to the tomb of your brother, can ye not verify the truth of the assertion, that Jesus saved others? Are there none of the officers present, who saw the bleeding ear of Malchus, have you forgotten who touched the part, and it was instantaneously healed? Yes, no fact was more public, none could have been more amply proved than this, that Jesus had saved others.

April 7.

PART II.

THE SAVIOUR OF OTHERS NOT ABLE
TO SAVE HIMSELF.

Matt. 27. xlii.

IF they meant that he had not physical power to deliver himself from the cross, and from the hands of his enemies, then was this the language of ignorance and unbelief. He, who on one occasion was surrounded by his enemies, when they designed to

throw him headlong down the brow of a certain hill, and who passed through them unperceived, could have easily eluded their most vigilant search, and escaped out of their hands. He, who in the garden, by a simple interrogation, caused the officers to fall to the ground, by one word, could have overwhelmed all employed in putting him to death, or have descended from the cross. No man could take his life from him, unless he pleased, for he had power both to lay it down, and to take it up again. He could have called ten legions of angels, who would have avenged his sufferings, and slain all his adversaries. But although Jesus had all power, yet there was a sense, in which it was true, that "himself he could not save." The reason was a moral one. He had stipulated to save others through the offering of himself. To save others, consistently with all the illustrious demands of eternal justice, it behoved him to suffer, and also to rise from the dead. The life of the world, rested on his death. Had he saved himself, the world would have been unredeemed, and all the prophecies and promises of the scriptures falsified. His truth rendered it impossible to save himself. His concern for the glory of his Father: his intense love to a world of sinners; and his determination to destroy the works of the devil, all rendered it true, that himself he could not save. Happy for the Jewish nation, who rejected their Lord, and happy for those in particular who put him to death, that himself he did not save.

Happy for every sinful child of man, for every undying human spirit, that himself he could not save. Shall we not feel deeply interested in those reasons, that rendered it impossible for Christ to save himself. And while Jesus saved others, ought we not to be deeply solicitous, that he should say unto our souls, "I am your salvation."

April 8.

CHRIST'S AFFECTIONATE CONCERN FOR HIS MOTHER.

Now there stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son. Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother.—John xix. 25—27.

It is generally supposed, that Joseph the husband of Mary, had been for some time deceased. And that Mary was mostly to be found in the company of her son, and was entirely dependant upon him. On the present occasion, we find her with other two Marys, and the beloved disciple, standing near the cross of Christ. What distress must have occupied every heart, what anguish especially, must have filled the breast of the afflicted mother of Jesus. Although Jesus was now enduring the intense

agonies of a lingering dissolution, yet the little group of devoted friends, arrested his attention. His eyes beheld them—his heart felt for them. For his distressed mother he now provided a son, who should be her protector, her comforter, her friend. Hence he said unto her “Woman, behold thy son,” let my beloved disciple be thine adopted child, consider him henceforth as thy son. In him thou shalt find a friend worthy of all thy esteem; his heart shall ever be thy sanctuary in trouble, and on his arm thou shalt lean with safety and delight. Thine own son now dies, but John shall abide to befriend thee, and care for thee, so long as thou shalt live. Then fixing his eyes on the beloved disciple, he said, “Behold thy mother.” I commit her in charge to thine affectionate care; consider her as the honoured handmaid of the Lord; favored to give birth to the world’s redeemer. Consider how that heart of her’s is now pierced through and through, by the sufferings of thy master, by the agonies I now endure, and in which thy salvation is concerned. I commend her to thy filial attention. Let thine arm befriend her, let thy society cheer her, soothe as far as thou canst, her passage through the valley of tears, till she shall be called to behold her son exalted on the right hand of the majesty on high. You anticipate the result. The charge was accepted; the beloved disciple received her as his mother, and from that hour he took her to his own home. How is filial piety recommended by

this astonishing scene. Jesus on whom a world's guilt was pressing, whose soul was engulfed in the waters of unutterable sorrows, did not forget his dependant mother, but in his dying words provides for her an asylum and a friend.

April 9.

CHRIST'S GARMENTS DIVIDED.

Then the soldiers when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part. John xix. 23.

It was an ancient custom, for the garments of executed criminals to be divided among those who were employed on the occasion. It was in this way that the Redeemer was treated. Jesus was stripped of his garments, and they were divided among the soldiers who crucified him. The outer robe of Jesus was divided into four parts, each part of which was given to a distinct soldier. In this apparently unimportant matter, we are reminded however of the grand medium of our redemption, of the great price by which our acceptance with God was obtained. By sin we had become the victims of nakedness and shame. In such circumstances we could not possibly stand in the Divine presence, or be accepted of him. But Jesus is stripped of his only robe, and thus through his poverty, humiliation, and death, we obtain better robes than our first parents

wore in Eden, even the garments of salvation. And as the garment of Christ was divided into four parts, it seems to intimate, that the four quarters of our globe are equally interested in the gracious provisions of redeeming love. And may we not further also infer, that as each of the soldiers obtained a part, that each sinful child of man, who humbly and believingly claims the garment of salvation, shall assuredly possess his part. And as the very crucifiers of Jesus, thus possessed his garments; are we not further instructed, that the Saviour's gospel is for the vilest of the vile, even the chief of sinners. While the children of this world are vainly seeking after gaudy finery, after splendid earthly attire, let it be our earnest wish, to be found clothed in the white robe of righteousness, that we may thus be permitted to mingle with the blood-washed throng, before the throne of God and the Lamb for ever.

April 10.

CHRIST'S SEAMLESS VESTURE.

Let us not rent it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be.

—*John xix. 24.*

How remarkably was every scriptural prediction realized in reference to the Son of God. His upper garments had been divided among the soldiers, but his inner coat or vesture, being without seam, they do not tear it, but agree to dispose of it

by lots, thus, unconsciously fulfilling a prophecy which had been delivered eleven hundred years before. For David had predicted and said, "They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture." (Ps. xxii. 18.) In this interesting event several lessons are communicated. By the seamless vesture of Christ we are reminded of the completeness and perfection of his religion. All preceding dispensations had been imperfect and temporary, Christ came to establish a system which should abolish all these, one in which all truth should be exhibited, and which should abide to the end of the world. By Christ's seamless vesture, we are also reminded of the unity of his church. All his people are one. For this he especially interceded in his valedictory prayer, "That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they may be all one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." (John xvii. 21.) How desirable it is that all Christ's professed friends should say, as the soldiers did of his vesture, "let us not rent it." Perfect uniformity is not likely to be effected by any process here, but perfect love and harmony may notwithstanding be cultivated. God is displeased with the jarrings and strifes of his people. By this the Holy Spirit is grieved, and the seamless vesture of Jesus is degraded and torn. Let us not forget that Christ not only came to unite us to God, but also to unite our hearts in the indissoluble bonds of peace and love. By this said the

blessed Jesus, shall all men know that ye are my disciples, "if ye love one another."

April 11.

CHRIST AND THE PENITENT MALEFACTOR.

Verily, I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise. — Luke xxiii. 43.

THE occasion of these words we meet with, in the earnest supplication of the poor malefactor who was expiring by the side of Christ. Jesus was crucified between two thieves, and thus he was accounted stricken and smitten of God; and in his death he was numbered with transgressors. Struck either with the dignity of the sufferer, or the astounding phenomena with which nature was affected, and doubtless too, touched with the finger of God, one of these exclaimed, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." His supplication was of a most extraordinary character. It was addressed to a fellow-sufferer—a reputed malefactor—the object of human scorn, hatred, and contempt. It was addressed to him when in the agonies of death. All else were mocking and reviling—the priests and elders were taunting him, saying, "He saved others; himself he cannot save"—the multitude were exclaiming, "If thou

be the Son of God, come down from the cross." Yet amidst all this derision and contemptuous treatment of the Saviour, this poor malefactor honoured him, and sought from his dying lips a promise of future felicity. He addresses him in the language of believing worship, — he gives him his own glorious and rightful title of Lord, — he sees in the sufferer the features of divinity, — he concedes to him all that prophets had written, all that Jesus had claimed, — he recognizes him as the Son of God, — as the possessor of a celestial kingdom, — and entreats when he should ascend to his throne, that he would give him a place in his merciful remembrance. Thus was Christ honoured by the worship and address of this poor malefactor. Thus did Christ's cross, as a powerful magnet draw a dying wretch beneath its saving influence. Thus while the religionists of the day despised and put to death the blessed Jesus, a poor profligate outcast, vested his mortal interests into his hands, and received the promise of eternal glory.

April 12

CHRIST AND THE PENITENT MALEFACTOR.

PART II.

THERE are yet several features in the prayer of the dying malefactor which are worthy of our

notice. Not only did he honour Jesus, as Lord, and recognised his claims to a kingdom, but he placed his soul's entire confidence in him. He sought from him, his favourable regards in a future world. He lost sight of his body and the sufferings of his crucifixion, he withdrew his thoughts from time and death, and looked beyond both, to the safety of his spirit, and his immortal well-being. In doing this he evinced amazing faith in the Redeemer,—he saw him in his humiliation, and beheld him sinking into the arms of death, yet he addressed him as the glorious Lord, and as the fountain of life. He was not favoured with a supernatural sight of the Divine glory as Moses was,—he did not obtain such a full and explicit revelation, as did Abraham,—he did not with Isaiah behold in vision the glory of the Lord of Hosts. We are not certain that he ever saw one of Christ's miracles, yet despite of all, his faith pierces through all the mystery which surrounded the cross, and he commits his immortal all, into the hands of Jesus. While his prayer was the evidence of strong faith, yet it was characterized by humility. He sought not great things—he desired only to be remembered—he left all else, to be supplied by the wisdom and goodness of the Saviour. Then we cannot fail to perceive the fervour, the holy earnestness which his prayer evinced. Lord remember me, pity a poor dying wretch, let thy compassionate eye be fixed upon me, — let thy boundless mercy accompany my guilty spirit,—let

not my soul go down from thy side to the dreary shades of death. "Lord remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Happy the man who has had fellowship of spirit, and kindredness of feeling, with this poor penitent sinner.

April 13.

CHRIST'S REPLY TO THE DYING MALEFACTOR.

PART III.

WE have already witnessed the peculiar situation of the suppliant, and the nature of the prayer he presented to Jesus. Let us now consider the answer which he received. I.—The answer was GRACIOUS—Christ did not reject his prayer—he did not refuse his petition—he did not upbraid him with his crimes; but, with all the majesty of unbounded compassion, he regarded his supplication, and gave him a positive assurance of his gracious regards. II.—The answer was IMMEDIATE—He did not keep him in anxious suspense, or in a state of distressing doubt. The poor petitioner was expiring—he was on the margin of the eternal world—a few moments more, and his state would be irrevocably fixed. Jesus therefore promptly regarded his request, and immediately promised him a place in Paradise. III.—The

answer was superabundantly GLORIOUS. He merely desired to be remembered — but Christ promises him an abode in Paradise. He engages that he shall accompany himself, and that very day be a participant with him in the joys of eternity. Then, IV.—The answer was exceedingly STRONG and POSITIVE. Christ places beneath his feet the immutable rock of his repeated promise, “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.” In this interesting case, we see the fulness, the freeness, and the efficacy of divine grace. No humble penitent after this need despair. No case after this can be deemed too desperate. Christ can save the vilest, yea, and to the uttermost, and under all circumstances, those who come unto God by him. But to secure this salvation, we must come humbly, and earnestly, and by faith, to the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness.

“The dying thief rejoiced to see
That Fountain, in his day;
And there may I, as vile as he,
Wash all my sins away!”

*April 14.*THE
EARTHQUAKE AT CHRIST'S DEATH.*And the Earth did quake, and the rocks rent.**Matt. xxvii. 51.*

How astonishing was the contrast exhibited at Christ's death between the inanimate and the intelligent creation of God. Men gazed with cruel hardness on the dying Redeemer, and mocked and reviled him in his expiring agonies. The Sun covered himself with sable darkness, and refused to witness the scene of horror and of blood. Men stood unmoved by the groans of the Man of Sorrows. The cold earth and flinty rocks seemed to evince greater sensibility and to reprobate the callousness of the more flinty hearted multitude, for "the earth did quake and the rocks rent." Doubtless this phenomena was designed to indicate the mighty revolutions which the death of Christ should effect. The Jewish system was now to be utterly abolished, the temple was now to have inscribed upon its portals *Ichabod*—the glory is departed. All the rights and services of that gorgeous and burdensome economy were to pass into utter oblivion. Now too, the whole world was to become the theatre of divine operations. Paganism, in all its horrid diversities of form and iniquity, was to be shaken to its centre, and a religion of holiness and benevolence was to be diffused throughout the ha-

bitable earth, and which should make the kingdoms of this world, to become the kingdoms of God, and of his Christ for ever. Might not this prodigy at Christ's death also be intended to denote the efficacy of the Redeemer's grace on the hearts of men, by which the most obstinate and callous, should be made sensitive, and gentle, and affectionate, as that of a little child, and thus be made meet for the kingdom of heaven.

“Hark! how he groans, while nature shakes,
And earth's strong pillars bend,
The Temple's veil in sunder breaks,
And solid marble rends.”

April 15.

CHRIST'S PRAYER FOR HIS MURDERERS.

Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.—

Luke xxiii. 34.

The crucifixion of Christ, was the most atrocious crime the Jews ever committed. When we contemplate the dignity of the illustrious sufferer, and the overwhelming evidence he gave of the divinity of his mission, we must perceive, that to shed his infinitely precious blood, must have been a crime of the deepest dye — a murder of the foulest and most aggravated description. Well might Jesus exclaim, “They know not what they do.” The

full amount of guilt they were then committing, will only be fully ascertained in the day of judgment, and the day of doom. Yet heinous as was the crime, unfathomable as was their guilt, it did not place them beyond the reach of mercy, it did not render their salvation impossible. What a striking scene is exhibited before us! The powers of earth and hell, are exhausting their malignant cruelty on the Son of God. Men and devils seem to vie with each other, which should have the pre-eminence in perpetrating this deed of horror and blood. Christ is enduring the most intense agonies, they could cause him to suffer, yet his heart becomes as it were insensible to his own excruciating sufferings, and compassion towards his enemies, triumphs over every other feeling. While they blaspheme, he prays,—while they mock and revile him, he intercedes for their salvation,—while they cover him with wounds, and extract his precious blood, every wound they open and every drop of blood they shed, became vocal on their behalf. Let heaven and earth be astonished, the dying victim exclaims,

“Forgive them Father, O forgive,
They know not that by me they live.”

Is it not then the interest of every self-convicted sinner to come to the same Redemer, and to plead,

“Thy precious death and life,—I pray,
Take all, take all my sins away.”

April 16.

CHRIST FORSAKEN OF HIS FATHER.

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me.—

Matt. xxvii. 46.

Do not imagine that when Jesus uttered these mysterious words, that the Divinity was separated from his humanity, or that Christ had ceased to be an object of complacency and delight with the Father. We cannot imagine at any period when God took greater interest in his Son, than when he was accomplishing the very act of atonement, by which all his perfections would be rendered eternally illustrious, and the redemption of a guilty world effected. God ever delighted in his Son, and never more so than at this solemn moment. But it behoved Christ to suffer the withdrawment of the joys and consolations of his Father's countenance. It was now that it pleased the Father to bruise him. He put him to grief. He presented the cup to his lips, and the bitterest portion of that cup he was now drinking when he exclaimed, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me." Now indeed was Divine justice, magnified in exacting the vast atoning sum for human redemption. Now the sufferer felt the unutterable weight of a world's guilt pressing upon his agonized soul. Now he was enduring the holy infliction of sins demerit, which required for a season, the hidings of his Father's face. Yet be it observed, the complaint of Jesus

did not imply regret that he had undertaken the redemption of the world,—neither did it imply despair as to its glorious consummation. He knew the momentous work was nearly accomplished,—he was certain as to its glorious result,—he did not doubt the Father's approval, or the bestowment of the joy that had been set before him. But he felt the billows rolling over his afflicted spirit. The tempest of wrath, was now raging with relentless fury. Darkness had not only surrounded the earth, but Christ's soul was filled with horrific and sable blackness, and in the depths of his agony, he exclaimed, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me." That partial eclipse of the Father's countenance obtained for the guilty family of man, the reconciled smiles of the blessed Deity. Now the clouds of indignation against an iniquitous race are removed, and through Jesus, the light of immortal blessedness, beams upon our perishing world.

April 17.

CHRIST'S THIRST.

I thirst.—John. xix 28.

JESUS had now been nailed to the cross for several hours,—the moment of his death was at hand. All that had been written of him in the prophets and the psalms had been fulfilled, except

one passage, and that is now realised, by the intense thirst which he endures. As it had been predicted, "His strength indeed was dried up like a potsherd, and his tongue cleaved to his jaws, and he was brought unto the dust of death." (Ps. xxii. 16.)

When we contemplate the accumulated sufferings which he had borne during the last twelve hours, we need not wonder that the fluids of his precious body were dried up, and that intolerable thirst necessarily followed. It is also deserving of notice, that thirst is the most distressing sensation of which the body is capable, and is therefore employed to represent the misery of lost souls. Jesus as our substitute, had to endure what was equal to that misery, and never perhaps, was that more fully realised, than when he exclaimed, "I thirst." Jesus, too had to pass through the dreary shades of dissolution, that he might have fellowship with his believing people. Here then he feels the racking torture of dying thirst, and he knows how to succour, how feelingly to sympathise with his people, when they are enduring the agonies of death. Christ's exclamation of thirst, met with no sympathy from the rocky hearted multitude. But they gave the illustrious Jesus, "vinegar mixed with hyssop to drink." Thus, that passage was literally fulfilled,—"They gave also gall for my meat, and in my thirst, they gave me vinegar to drink" (Ps. lxix. 21.) Let us not however lose sight of the glorious consequences of Christ's excruciating

thirst to us. Thus, has he obtained for us the streams of salvation here, and the ceaseless flowing rivers of pleasures at his right hand for evermore. He now invites from his Mediatorial throne, and says whosoever will come, may come, and take of the waters of life freely.

April 18.

CHRIST'S TRIUMPHANT EXCLAMATION.

It is finished! — John xix. 30.

NEVER was a more important sentence uttered. So important to man—so important to Jehovah—so important to Christ. Man's immortal interests had been undertaken by Jesus. He had freely come to do the will of God, as it was written in the book—he had engaged to bear the curse which sin had brought upon the human race—he had offered his own breast to receive the sharp and glittering sword which must otherwise have smitten every child of man. When the fulness of time had come, he entered upon the arduous undertaking. His engagements were now nearly finished—a solid foundation of happiness was now laid—the uttermost farthing was now paid into the hands of Justice. The bond of suretyship was now signed and sealed, and rendered valid and saving to every

believer to the end of the world. Yes, now it was — when Christ exclaimed “It is finished” — that man’s salvation was completed. The expiring cry of the Redeemer was not less IMPORTANT to JEHOVAH. He had satisfied his infinite justice in punishing sin to the utmost. He had exhibited his utter detestation of moral evil, and hence his holiness was greatly magnified. He had rendered his truth everlastingly glorious, in not conniving at transgression, but fulfilling, to the very letter, the threatening of death, although removed from the criminal to the surety. He had also given the most resplendent revelation of his infinite grace, unbounded mercy, and eternal love. Here was a full manifestation of all his adorable perfections, so that “the first archangel never saw, so much of God before.” Surely this exclamation could not be less IMPORTANT to Jesus himself — that his arduous undertaking was now completed — that his unparalleled suffering was ended — that his ignominy was now about to be exchanged for dignity — his cross for a throne — his wreath of thorns for a crown of glory — that his groans and anguish were to be eternally forgotten in the rivers of pleasure which were to flow around his mediatorial seat for ever.

“ ’Tis finish’d ! let the joyful sound
Be heard through all the nations round :
’Tis finish’d let the echo fly
Through heaven and hell — through earth and sky ! ”

*April 19.*CHRIST'S TRIUMPHANT
EXCLAMATION.

PART II.

Now the testimonies of the prophets of which Jesus had been the Alpha and Omega, were all accomplished. It behoved him that every promise should be fulfilled, every prophecy accomplished. In Jesus every promise had now been realized, and every prediction embodied. Now ancient types and shadows were all doomed to pass away, seeing that the truth and the substance had appeared. Now for ever ceased the ceremonies of the law, and another victim should never be offered which should be acceptable to God. Now all preceding dispensations were about to expire, and the last and best that God should ever give to man was being ratified with the blood of the Cross. Now was struck the fatal blow, by which the gates of hell were shaken to their centre, and which should finally issue in the total ruin of Satan's empire in the world. "Now was the judgment of this world—now was the Prince of this world cast out." When Jesus exclaimed, "It is finished," a new æra in the history both of heaven and earth commenced. Earth was now to be, in a more universal and glorious sense, the theatre of the divine operations. From this instant Christ was to com-

mence his aggressive attacks upon Satan's usurped dominions, and by which he should ultimately rescue our enslaved world from his tyrannical grasp, and thereby subdue all things unto himself. Now heaven's portals, which would have been closed against every child of man, were thrown wide open, and the tree of life, in the midst of the Paradise of God, was rendered accessible to the whole human race. O, how glorious, how blessed was Christ's dying exclamation! Here is the foundation of my hope. Here is my reply to every accusation from the enemy. Here is the object of my trust and joy. God forbid that I should glory in anything, save in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ.

April 20.

JESUS COMMENDING HIS SPIRIT INTO THE HANDS OF HIS FATHER.

When Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.—Luke xxiii. 46.

It was of the utmost importance that Christ's death should be voluntary. Had his life been forced from him, then would it not have been an acceptable sacrifice for a guilty world. It behoved him freely to lay down his life, and thus, as our cheerful surety, to free us from the dreadful penalty of our sins. Our text is the grand proof that

Christ thus freely gave himself. Notwithstanding all the accumulated weight of sorrows he had borne, yet he was not exhausted—he did not gradually become more weak and faint, and then fall gently into the hands of death: he had still full power over his spirit; he could easily have come down from the cross and saved himself—hence, when the moment arrived that Divine Justice demanded his spirit he was ready with the offering; and having cried with a loud voice—a proof of the vigorous energies he still possessed—he said, “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.” But not only do we see the voluntariness of Christ’s death, but also the piety and the resignation, and the composure with which his life terminated. He knew that his Father would receive the precious deposit—he knew that in dying he was to be the example of his saints—hence he sanctified death with prayer, and by his unshaken confidence, by his calmness, and by his dying composure, he has taught us our only refuge in a dying hour. By faith we are the children of God, and joint heirs with Christ, and therefore when we expire, we may adopt his dying words, relying upon it, that our immortal spirits will be received into his heavenly hands.

April 21.

CHRIST'S PIERCED SIDE.

But one of the soldiers pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.—John xix. 34.

How marvellously did Divine Providence secure the literal fulfilling of all that had been written concerning Jesus. It had been predicted, that “not a bone of him should be broken,” And the paschal Lamb, one of the most striking of all the types of Christ, was to be roasted whole, and not a bone of it was to be broken. Behold then how God preserves the Saviour, and realises the predictions of his word. To facilitate the death of the criminals, the executioners broke the legs of both the malefactors, but perceiving that Jesus was already dead, they broke not his legs. But there was another passage which had to be fulfilled. Zechariah had spoken of Jesus, as being pierced; he had referred to a fountain which should be opened for sin and uncleanness. While the soldiers therefore passively fulfil the first scripture, in not breaking a bone of the Saviour, one of them actively fulfils the other, in thrusting the spear into his heart, from which immediately flowed the predicted fountain of blood and water. Here then we perceive the cruelty and wrath of man fulfilling what God had aforetime determined should be done. Let it be observed however, that Christ had already yielded his Spirit into his Father's hands, so that

this did not at all interfere with the freeness and voluntariness of Christ's death. The wisdom of God secured all the interests involved in this mysterious, and all momentous undertaking.

April 22.

CHRIST'S PIERCED SIDE.

PART II.

LET us now contemplate the piercing of Christ's side, as it stands connected with the various parties concerned. It was in respect of Christ, a proof of his Messiahship, and of the reality of his death. The passages previously quoted, evidently referred to the Messiah, and their accomplishment at Christ's death, complete the evidence of his being the predicted Saviour, and truly the Son of God. Besides, thus was the reality of his death demonstrated. After the pericardium was pierced, and the fluid of life had flown from the orifice, had not the Saviour been dead already, humanly speaking, death must have instantly followed. So that the piercing of Christ's side, greatly establishes the reality of Christ's death; on the truth of which, the whole structure of redemption rests. On the soldier's part, it was a mere act of wanton cruelty. He thought of nothing, but gratifying a barbarous passion, of outvieing his fellows in malignant cru-

elty, towards the reputed deceiver. But however thoughtlessly he might have committed this outrage on Christ's sacred person, the matter to us is deeply affecting and instructive. The soldier was the mere instrument of this act. It was our sins that brought Jesus from heaven; that apprehended, condemned, and put him to death. And it was our sins too, that lifted up the spear, and thrust it in his precious heart. How then does it become us, to look upon him whom we have pierced, and mourn. Genuine repentance flows only from an awakened sense of the extreme evil of sin, and never was that so fully manifested, as in the death of the Son of God. But from this subject, we also derive instruction. We are guilty, and as an atonement for our sins, blood flowed from the Saviour's side. We have redemption through his blood. We are unholy, and for our sanctification, flowed water from the side of Christ. Thus were exhibited in two significant emblems, the means, both of our pardon, and purification.

“There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners plung'd beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.”

April 23.

THE RENT VEIL.

And behold the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.—Matt. xxvii. 51.

CHRIST'S whole life had been attended by the most astonishing prodigies and miracles. His birth was ushered in by a choir of angels, and a brilliant meteor was suspended over the place where the new born Saviour was to be found. His baptism in like manner, was signally distinguished by a voice from the excellent glory, by the opening heavens, and the miraculous descent of the Holy Ghost. His ministerial career, was one of signs and wonders. Never did any other man do the works which Christ did. His death was accompanied by events, equally as striking and wonderful. Among these wonderful phenomena, our attention is at present directed to that which occurred in the temple. "And behold the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom." The veil of the temple was that which separated between the holy, and the most holy place. It was made of embroidered woollen, was more than a foot in thickness, and was sixty feet in length. The veil was designed to keep strictly private the holiest of holies, and beyond it no foot ever ventured but that of the great High Priest, and he only once a year, when he took with him the blood of annual expiation, and made atonement for the sins of the people.

Now at Christ's death this veil was rent in twain, the whole of it was severed from the top to the bottom. And thus the holiest place was exposed to the gaze of those who were worshipping in the sanctuary. That this was a miraculous occurrence must have been strikingly manifest. No human hand could have effected it. It was obviously the result of Almighty power. It was an event fraught with importance, and was designed to attest the divinity of the Son of God.

April 24.

THE RENT VEIL.

PART II.—*Matt.* xxvii. 51.

HAVING glanced at the event recorded, let us now endeavour to ascertain its spiritual signification and design. It was doubtless designed to represent the entire abolition of the old dispensation with all its rites and ceremonies. It is highly probable that the veil was rent just as the High Priest was standing before the mercy-seat, and was the signal for the termination of the Aaronical Priesthood for ever. Now the sacred place was open to universal gaze, God himself having torn the intervening veil from the top to the bottom. While it denoted the extinction of the old economy with its priests and sacrifices it also was obviously designed to honour Jesus in his priestly office, and the sacrifice which

he was now offering for the redemption of a guilty world. The ancient dispensation was entirely typical, the whole was shadowy of Christ and his kingdom. Jesus the true priest, having therefore appeared, and the sacrifice having been offered which alone possessed saving efficacy, it was proper that the types and shadows should now pass away. Now too was rent another veil, even the body of the Saviour, in which had been concealed all the fullness of the indwelling Godhead. And now too was Jesus ready as the great Priest of his church, to enter into the holiest place of all, even the heaven of heavens, there to appear in the presence of God for us. Finally, the rending of the veil, was doubtless also designed symbolically to express the removal of the wall of partition between the Jewish and the Gentile worlds. Now there is, "neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ is all and in all." It is a glorious truth that Christ is not only the Messiah of the Jews, but the Saviour of all men, especially of them who believe.

April 25.

THE DARKNESS AT CHRIST'S DEATH.

Now from the sixth hour, there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour.—Matt. xxvii. 45.

THIS is another of those astonishing events which occurred at the Redeemer's death. There was

darkness over all the land, for the space of three hours, from the sixth hour to the ninth. This darkness was *supernatural*. It could not arise from natural causes; it being now full moon, when it was impossible that the sun could be eclipsed. It was the attestation of God, to the greatness of the work which Christ was now effecting upon the cross. Never had such a scene been witnessed from the creation of the world.

“The sun beheld it — No, the shocking scene
 Drove back his chariot; Midnight veil'd his face:
 Not such as this; not such as nature makes;
 A midnight, Nature shudder'd to behold;
 A midnight new! a dread eclipse, (without
 Opposing spheres) from her Creator's crown!
 Sun! didst thou fly thy Maker's pain? or start
 At that enormous load of human guilt,
 Which bow'd his blessed head; o'erwhelmed his cross,
 Made groan the centre; burst earth's marble womb
 With pangs, strange pangs! deliver'd of her dead!
 Hell howl'd; and Heaven that hour let fall a tear;
 Heav'n wept that men might smile!
 Heaven bled, that Man
 Might never die!”

This darkness no doubt, was design'd to represent the sable gloom which now overspread the soul of Jesus, and his dreadful conflict with the powers of hell. It also signally exhibited the darkness of unbelief, which at this time overspread the Jewish

people. Now the dread empire of Satan, was shaken to its very centre. From this hour, the glorious rays of celestial truth, should be reflected through the medium of Christ's cross, until the whole earth should be filled with the light of salvation.

“ Well might the sun in darkness hide,
And shut his glories in ;
When Christ, the mighty Maker died,
An offering for my sin.”

April 26.

THE CENTURION'S TESTIMONY

Truly this man was the Son of God.—Mark xv. 39.

THE person who made this public avowal, was the centurion, the person who had the hundred soldiers under his charge, and to whom the execution of Christ was committed. Doubtless he had often assisted on similar occasions, but never had he beheld such a sufferer, never had he witnessed such scenes as attended the death of Christ. He had doubtless watched every motion, and listened to every word, which escaped the Saviour. He had seen his unparalleled insults. He had seen Christ's affectionate concern for his disconsolate mother. He had heard him promise a place in Paradise to the penitent malefactor. He had doubtless too, been struck with his dying prayer for his murderers, And then, when ordinarily, nature would have been

exhausted, he heard Christ's loud and triumphant exclamation, when he said, "it is finished," and when he gave up the Ghost. This combination of circumstances, produced a powerful conviction of Christ's innocence and goodness. And he exclaimed, "Truly this was the Son of God." Besides all this, there were the astounding signs, which had accompanied Messiah's death. If Christ had been guilty, wherefore did midnight spread her sable curtain over the land at noon day? Why was the sacred tapestry of the temple's veil, torn from the top to the bottom? What caused the earth to shake and tremble, and the rocks to break asunder? Why should all nature be affected, and confused at the death of an impostor? The evidence of Christ's Divinity, was too overwhelming for the centurion's mind to resist: hence he exclaimed, "truly this man was the Son of God."

April 27.

THE CENTURION'S TESTIMONY.

PART II.—*Mark* xv. 39.

How very singularly did God make the wrath of man to praise him, in the events connected with the death of his Son. The Jews wished Pilate to condemn Jesus for sedition and blasphemy. Though Pilate did condemn him, yet he publicly proclaimed

that he found no fault in him. A centurion with a band of soldiers, carry the sentence into execution, and the captain of them, publicly avows his belief, that the crucified Jesus is truly the Son of God. The centurion's testimony was the first fruit of Christ's death. How soon did the cross, with its magnetical influence, draw one poor soul to feel its quickening and saving power. How important too, to the Christian religion, that the superintendant, who officiated at the execution of its founder, should testify at the spot, that the sufferer was truly the Son of God. The testimony of the centurion was one of acknowledged impartiality: the testimony, not of a disciple, or friend, but of the officer, employed by the civil authorities, to put Christ to death. The testimony was prompt, and courageous. He did not wait till he could communicate his convictions privately to his friends, but at the very time, and place of Christ's death, he publicly exclaimed, "truly this man is the Son of God." The testimony is one in which we are all personally concerned. Ask yourselves if you truly credit Christ's Divine mission and work. Do you receive him, trust in him, love, and obey him as the Son of God? Have you the internal witness of the Spirit for he that believeth, hath the witness in himself?

April 28.

INTERMENT OF JESUS.

And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb.

Matt. xxvii. 59, 60.

JOSEPH of Arimathea was a rich man, a councillor and member of the Sanhedrim, and a private disciple of the blessed Jesus. No sooner, therefore, is the Saviour dead than he steps forth to obtain possession of his body, that he might protect it from the indignities of the executioners, and place it in his own sepulchre. Pilate, having ascertained that Christ was really dead, readily acceded to his request, and thus, although Christ was numbered among transgressors, yet, according to the Prophet, he was placed with "the rich in his death." We are now called to see the mangled form of the Saviour hastily taken down from the cross, because the Jewish sabbath was at hand, as touching a dead body would have prevented those thus employed from engaging in the services of the temple. At this time, Nicodemus, another secret disciple, the same who came to Christ by night, brought a hundred weight of spices to embalm the body of Jesus. In some instances, this rite is one of considerable time and labour: but in this case the body of Christ was simply wrapped in the linen cloth, on which these spices were spread. The place of Christ's interment

was Joseph's own sepulchre, and it had yet been unoccupied—it was a new tomb, which he had “hewn out in the rock.” Thus Christ, being the only inhabitant of this tomb, his resurrection would be the more obvious and certain. The body of Christ being thus placed in the sepulchre, a large stone is rolled to its mouth, and Christ is left to sanctify and illumine, by his precious remains, the region of the dead. Observe, Christ was so poor that his cradle and his tomb were alike borrowed: even now, it was literally true that “he had no place wherein to lay his head.” A sinless Saviour, however, did not require a grave for himself, so it was meet that he should obtain the temporary loan of it, from those whose final resurrection he came to secure.

April 29.

THE SEPULCHRE SECURED.

So they went and made the Sepulchre secure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch. — Matt. xxvii. 66.

THE prodigies attending Christ's death must have produced peculiar sensations in the minds of Christ's murderers. Happy if, like the Centurion, they had been convinced, and owned Jesus as the Son of God. Instead of this, they blindly persevere in closing their eyes against the light, and madly persist in rejecting the counsel of God

against themselves. They now, therefore, apply to Pilate, that he would take care and secure the body of Christ, lest he should be removed by his disciples, and they should say he had risen from the dead. Pilate, doubtless, would treat their fears with contempt; but, nevertheless, he yielded, and allowed them to go and make the sepulchre secure. We now witness the stone at the mouth of the tomb receiving the impress of the Roman signet, and a guard of soldiers is fixed to watch the sepulchre. How effectually were they thus serving the cause of Christianity! But for this extreme care, they might indeed have said that Christ had been stolen away. But who should dare to break the seal? Who would encounter the soldiery, in attempting to steal Christ's body? Yet how vainly were they opposing the designs of Jehovah. How infatuated were they to take counsel against the Lord, and against his anointed. As well might they have prevented the appearance of the orb of day as the rising of Christ from the dead. "He that sitteth in the heavens did laugh; the Lord held them in derision." Now human malignity had effected its utmost against the Saviour. His blood is spilt — his death is effected. And now, too, human sagacity has employed all its resources, to prevent his friends from deceiving the world by asserting his resurrection. His body they have in their own possession — the tomb is sealed and watched — the

Jewish rulers and priests are trying to efface the remembrance of his death, in observing the duties of their high sabbath—time is silently rolling on, we must wait for the first day of the week to confirm the Jews in their sentence against Christ, or to realize his divine mission, by his resurrection from the dead.

April 30.

THE EARTHQUAKE AT CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.

And, behold, there was a great Earthquake; for the Angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.—Matt. xxviii. 2.

THE morning of the first day of the week had now arrived. The Saviour had now been one entire day and two nights in the sepulchre—the predicted period of the event of his resurrection was come. On that event the whole superstructure of his kingdom was to rest for ever. The seal is still untouched. The Roman guard are pacing the gloomy paths of the silent garden, when, behold! a rumbling noise is heard, and the ground begins to move beneath their feet. Panic-struck, they fain would fly from this scene of consternation, when their attention is arrested by a splendid beauteous form,—the angel of the Lord, who is commissioned

from heaven to minister at the resurrection of the Saviour. The stone is at once rolled from the door; and the celestial messenger makes that his temporary seat, which was intended to prevent the removal of Christ's body from the tomb. The brightness of the angel was such that his countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow. No wonder that the guard were overwhelmed. No wonder they fell as dead men to the ground. So soon, however, as they recover, they repair to the chief priests and elders, and relate all the things that were done. How inefficient, however, are all external signs, however marvellous, in producing a right state of heart before God. The priests, as they had bought a Judas to betray Christ, now purchase, with large sums of money, the consciences of the guard; and a covenant of lies is immediately drawn and signed; and they all agree to tell the world the foolish and stupid story, that while the guard slept, his disciples stole him away.

May 1.

CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.

Why seek ye the living among the dead; he is not here, but is risen.—Luke xxiv. 5—6.

THE resurrection of Jesus, doubtless took place at the instant of the earthquake, when the angel

of the Lord descended and rolled away the stone from the door of the sepulchre. Now had been fulfilled all those predictions respecting his burial, and now, according to his own words, it behoved him to build again the temple of his own body, which the Jews had indeed destroyed. As Jonah too, was three days in the belly of the fish, so that signal type, was now realised in Christ, being a portion of three days in the heart of the earth, the last and most striking sign of his Divinity, with which the world should ever be favored. But the resurrection of Jesus has been disputed. The Jews still scorn the doctrine of Christ's resurrection: and the sceptical deist treats it, as a mere priestly invention. The Christian values it as the key-stone, bearing the whole edifice of Christianity. Let us briefly examine the evidence which scripture and reason afford on this important subject. It is certain that Christ died. His death is placed beyond all doubt. His body was secured and guarded by the Roman soldiers, and the mouth of the sepulchre was sealed. Who would dare to break it? Who would oppose the guard? The body was missing — the tomb is empty. What has become of the remains of Christ? If he is not risen, why do not his enemies produce the corpse, and confront his disciples? What account do the guard give of the matter? They say, that while they slept, his disciples stole him away. How came they to sleep? It was death for a soldier to be found asleep on guard. Strange

that they should all sleep, at the same time. Still more so, that when asleep, they should observe Christ's body removed, and know that it was his disciples who were stealing him? The ridiculous account furnished by the guard, forms very presumptive evidence in favor of Christ's resurrection from the dead.

May 2.

CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.

PART II.—*Luke* xxiv. 5—5

WE have noticed the improbable account given by the Roman guard, of the removal of Christ's body. Let us now consider the evidence given by Christ's disciples, as to this matter. Who are the witnesses? They are the friends of Jesus, it must be conceded, but still it is obvious, that their testimony is worthy of all acceptation. They were *plain, honest* persons; they had no influence to employ, nor riches to bribe, by which they could expect to succeed in establishing such an imposition as that of Christ's resurrection. Besides, they were so influenced by fear and despondency, that only a few days ago, when Christ was apprehended, they all forsook him and fled. Consider their *statement*, it is as to a matter of fact, they affirm that Christ is risen. And they do so, because they have seen

him, heard his voice, and had a full opportunity of minutely surveying his person. Consider the *place*, and *time* of this testimony. They declare these things in Jerusalem, where he had been condemned and put to death. Where all his enemies resided. Where the priests were. Where Pilate was. Where dwelt the soldiers, who had watched his tomb. And these things they declare *immediately*; this is only the third day from his death. Calvary is yet crimsoned with his blood. And yet they publicly affirm that he is risen from the dead. And for forty years after this event, the doctrine of Christ's resurrection is preached in the temple, synagogues, and streets of the city of Jerusalem. Then, what *motives* could influence these witnesses? In preaching Christ's resurrection, they would be branded as fools and madmen. They would be deserted by friends, hated by enemies, and persecuted by all. And in the defence of this doctrine, they freely sacrificed all earthly goods, and most of them, at last, even life itself. Then observe, these *witnesses* were *numerous*. Several women saw Christ, and conversed with him; the two disciples going to Emmaus, saw him. He was seen of the eleven, on several occasions; then of five hundred brethren at once; and last of all, by Saul, the persecutor of the church, as one born out of due time. Finally, consider the effects which the preaching of Christ's resurrection produced. It was the means of breaking the hearts, and con-

verting the souls of three thousand Jerusalem sinners in one day. And in tens of thousands of instances, it has proved the power of God to the salvation of immortal souls. Yes, unnumbered multitudes have felt this doctrine, to be spirit and life to their souls.

May 3.

CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.

PART III.—*Luke* xxiv. 5—6

HAVING glanced at the evidence of Christ's resurrection, let this exercise be devoted to consider *its character, importance and design*. Christ's resurrection had been both typified and predicted in the writings of the old testament scriptures. The release of Isaac, after being bound as a sacrifice, on the third day after leaving his Father's house ; at the release and exaltation of Joseph from prison, at the third year of his confinement ; the removal of the gates of Gaza by Sampson, during the darkness of midnight ; and the deliverance of Jonah from the belly of the fish ; all strikingly prefigured the resurrection of Christ from the dead. And both David, Isaiah, and Hosea, had foretold the same event. Christ had also repeatedly spoken of it to his disciples. (*see Matt.* xx. 17—19.) Christ's resurrection was effected by his own *Divine power*. He had power to lay down his life, and he had power to take

it up again. He was the power of God, and emphatically the life of the world. His resurrection body, was identically the same that suffered. Hence he was at once recognised by his disciples. Hence too, he exhibited his sacred scars; his pierced hands and feet. His body however, was distinguished for its peculiar properties and glory. He could render himself visible or invisible. He could present himself in the midst of his disciples, when the doors were all closed. Doubtless it was what the Apostle means, when he speaks of "a glorious spiritual body." When Jesus arose, he arose to die no more. Now he exclaims in triumph, "I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore." The Sun of heaven set in blood on Calvary's elevated mount, but arose the third day, in celestial splendour, to set no more for ever. Christ arose from the dead with unabated affection for a guilty and perishing world. All the calumnies which his enemies heaped upon him, all the insults he had borne, and all the sufferings he had endured, had not impaired his affection for the souls of men. He died, praying for his enemies, and arose, that repentance and remission of sins might be preached to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. The *importance* of Christ's resurrection we must defer to our next exercise.

May 4.

CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.

PART IV.—*Luke xxiv. 5—6*

THE resurrection of Jesus is a doctrine of primary importance. It behoved Christ to rise from the dead, and if he be not risen, then both preaching and hearing the Gospel are alike in vain. Blessed be God, the evidence of Christ's resurrection is abundantly satisfactory. Christ is risen indeed. We may therefore contemplate, with delight, the great ends which that resurrection accomplished. By rising from the dead, Jesus has fully proved the divinity of his person and mission. God would never have raised up an impostor from the dead—He never would have set his broad supernatural seal on the pretensions of a deceiver. God has therefore confirmed all the claims of Jesus, as the Messiah and the divine Son of God. By Christ's resurrection, solid ground of hope is laid for the believing sinner. Jesus, as the surety, engaged to pay all demands against the sinner. Now God releases him from the prison of the tomb, and thus the satisfaction of the work of Christ is attested. Now the sinner has good ground of hope, not only from Christ's death, but also from his resurrection from the dead. Besides, a dead Saviour could not possibly quicken and save a dead sinner. It is therefore indispensable that he must

be raised from the dead, who is to be the resurrection and life of others. By Christ's resurrection our minds are naturally directed to the resurrection of all his people. Christ always acted in a public capacity. He was not incarnate for himself but for sinners — he lived and died for sinners. His resurrection was for the benefit of sinners. But it was also a sign and pledge of the resurrection of all his saints. He is the first-fruits, and afterwards there shall be the ingathering of the mighty harvest at his coming. He was raised as the Head; all the members of his body shall be raised to live with him, that where he is, there they may be also. Yes, Jesus will assuredly raise all who believe in him in the great day. And he will raise them in his own form and likeness, that there may be a glorious conformity, between himself and his saints for ever.

May 5.

CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.

PART V.—*Luke* xxiv. 5, 6.

THE resurrection of Christ was not only necessary, as a proof of his divinity, as a foundation of believing hope, and as a pledge of our resurrection; but also it was necessary on his own account. It was necessary, 1st, that he might complete *his me-*

diatorial work. It behoved him to enter into the holiest place of all, that the mercy-seat might be sprinkled with his precious blood; and that thus, as our great High Priest, he might appear in the presence of God for us. This work also, involved his intercessions for his people, at the right hand of the majesty on high, as well also, that he might be the way of access to God, and the channel of all communications from God to us, and especially that he might send down the Holy Spirit. Then as the King of Zion, he had to defend his church, enlarge his kingdom, and extend his reign, until all his enemies should be made his footstool. It was necessary that Jesus should rise from the dead, that he *might be rewarded for his toils and sufferings.* He endured the cross and despised the shame, for the joy that was set before him. God had covenanted with him, that he should “see his seed prolong his days, and that the pleasure of the Lord, should prosper in his hand.” In virtue of that covenant, God did raise his son, and exalted him above all principalities and powers, and gave him a name above every name, and said, “rule thou in the midst of thine enemies;” “Thy throne O God, is for ever and ever, a sceptre of righteousness, is the sceptre of thy kingdom; thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness, above thy fellows. (Heb. i. 8—9.)

May 6.

CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.

PART VI.—*Luke xxiv. 5, 6.*

How glorious is the contrast, between a suffering and a risen Saviour. The man of sorrows, is now the prince of life, the Lord of glory, and appears on his throne, as heir of all things, and has written on his vesture and on his thigh, Lord of Lords, and King of Kings. We cannot meditate on his resurrection, without deriving the greatest possible consolation. Assured of this, we have an immoveable ground of hope and joy. Assured of this, we can approach God with humble yet unshaken confidence, as well satisfied in the work of his son. Assured of this, we rejoice in the presence of Christ in heaven, who is preparing mansions there, to which he will receive all his people. Assured of this we already overcome the fears of death, and exclaim, "O death, where is thy sting, O grave, where is thy victory; thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Assured of this, we know that as we now live to him and by him, that we shall finally live with him, and be where he is, to behold his glory, yea to participate with him of that glory, which he had with the Father, before the world was. Yes, in Christ's resurrection, we triumph over sin, by its justifying power; and

over Satan, and over death, by the gracious energy, and almighty influence which it imparts.

“ All hail, triumphant Lord,
Who sav'st us with thy blood !
Wide be thy name ador'd,
Thou rising, reigning God !
With thee we rise,
With thee we reign,
And empires gain,
Beyond the skies.”

May 7.

CHRIST'S WOUNDED HANDS AND SIDE.

*Reach hither thy fingers, and behold my hands, and reach
hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side, and be not
faithless, but believing.—John xx. 27.*

AFTER Christ's resurrection, he manifested himself to the women and to the disciples on several occasions, Thomas however, had been absent, and he refused to credit the statement of those who had seen the Saviour, and declared, that in no wise would he be convinced, unless he put his finger into the print of the nails, and thrust his hand into his side. After eight days, that is, on the succeeding first day of the week, the disciples were again assembled, and Thomas was among them, when

Jesus stood in the midst of them, and having said, "Peace be unto you," he turned to Thomas, and said, "Reach hither thy finger and behold my hands, and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless, but believing." In Christ's wounded hands and side, we are clearly taught the reality and identity of Christ's resurrection. The Saviour retained the striking marks of ignominy and suffering, which he had received on Calvary. Here were the very prints of the nails still open and unhealed. Here was the passage in his side, which had been formed by the soldier's spear. Hence it is obvious, that it was the identical body, which had expired upon the cross. In Christ's exhibiting himself to Thomas, we perceive too, that the Messiah is not ashamed of his wounds. These are indeed, Immanuel's scars of honor. And the glories obtained by these, shall fill heaven with renown, and eternity with his praise. Myriads of lofty spirits now gaze with ineffable delight upon Messiah's form, as he appears on the throne, "As the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." And myriads more shall join in the heavenly song, Unto him who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God, be glory and dominion for ever.

May 8.

CHRIST'S WOUNDED HANDS AND SIDE.

PART II.—*John* xx. 27.

WHAT love and condescension did Jesus display in exhibiting his hands and side to Thomas. He might have allowed him to have remained the subject of infatuation and unbelief. But he pitied his infirmity, thus shewing the greatness of his love and compassion towards him. While we wonder, on the one hand, at the unbelieving obstinacy of Thomas; and on the other, at the amazing love and condescension of Jesus; we may profitably apply the subject to our own experience and circumstances. Have we not displayed equal unbelief? Christ has been evidently set before us as the crucified Saviour of the world. His love has been published to us in his blessed gospel. We have had the influences of his Holy Spirit, and all the completed evidences of his Messiahship and Godhead: and yet how often have we been faithless and unbelieving; and how unreasonable, how ungrateful, how ruinous is unbelief. It effectually closes the mind against all light, and steels the heart, and renders it incapable of any holy feeling or emotion. We wonder at the condescending love of Jesus to Thomas.—Have we not been equally favoured? We cannot read his word, or hear his

gospel, without beholding his sacred wounds — a suffering Saviour — a Redeemer who has ransomed us by his precious blood — who was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, by whose stripes we are healed, is the sum and substance of the gospel. To reject the gospel is to refuse to see Christ's hands and side; and therefore involves an amount of unbelief, which Thomas was in no wise guilty of. When he saw, he was convinced. He at once embraced the Saviour, and adored him as his Lord and God. Happy all who in this manner receive the Saviour, and by believing in him have everlasting life. Let the penitent enquirer, when approaching the mercy-seat, be encouraged, by remembering that Christ is before that seat, exhibiting his hands and side, as the ground of the poor trembling sinner's hope. Let the believer, too, in all his sorrows and sufferings, never forget how Christ has sanctified the keenest pains of human nature, and that he knows how to succour and support his afflicted people.

May 9.

CHRIST'S QUESTION TO PETER.

Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? — John xxi. 17.

PETER, it will be remembered, had denied his Saviour; and, although Christ had been seen of

him after his resurrection, yet we do not read of any direct and intimate intercourse until Christ proposed to him this striking and affecting question. It is not likely that Peter had forgotten his own frailty and sin in denying his Lord. He still must have felt how cowardly, how ungratefully, and how unworthily, he had acted on that occasion — how must he have been affected, then, when this question was proposed ! Would he not conclude that his sincerity was still doubted ? — and how painful to be the object of suspicion, and especially from those we highly esteem and love, and whose confidence we are anxious to secure. But the question was designed to give Peter an opportunity of again expressing his attachment to the Saviour. Before he could consistently go and invite others to love Christ, it must be a matter of absolute certainty that he both loved, and was loved of Jesus. Then the question was calculated to try his humility. Peter had failed through self-confidence—he averred his resolution to follow Christ though all men forsook him. He evidently thought too highly of himself, and being thus lifted up, he fell into the condemnation of the devil. Jesus therefore said unto him, “Lovest thou me *more than these* ?” They had, indeed, all forsaken him, but Peter alone had denied him. The question however elicited a satisfactory reply. Peter could appeal to the omniscience of the Redeemer, and say, “Lord, thou knowest all

things; thou knowest that I love thee." He spake not for others; whatever the rest did, he knew one thing—that his heart's affections were sincerely fixed on Jesus. Do we thus love Christ? Does he reign on the throne of our affections? Can we appeal to the Searcher of hearts on this subject? For if any man love not the Lord Jesus, he will be Anathema Maranatha, *i. e.* accursed when Christ shall come.

May 10.

ASCENSION OF CHRIST.

While they beheld he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight.—Acts i. 9.

JESUS had now fulfilled all his engagements upon earth—he had lived and died for the salvation of the world—he had given demonstrative evidence of his resurrection from the dead—he had taught his disciples fully, and commissioned them to preach his gospel to every creature—he had pledged his presence with each and with all of them, even to the end of the world—and now the period of his return to his kingdom and glory had arrived; therefore he led his disciples out as far as Bethany, and there, while in the act of blessing them, he was received out of their sight. Let us notice some of the particulars connected with this illustrious event. The time of Christ's ascension was

forty days and forty nights after his resurrection—thus giving ample space and opportunity for his enemies to disprove the fact of his resurrection. And thus giving to his own disciples abundant means of being thoroughly satisfied themselves in reference to that great truth on which the whole structure of Christianity was to rest. Then notice the precise place of his ascension—the Mount of Olives—a place which he had often consecrated with his devotions—the place where his deep and mysterious sufferings commenced. It is remarkable how Jesus made choice of mountains as the scenes of most of the important events of his wonderful life. On one of these he delivered his celebrated sermon, which contains the entire code of the laws of Christianity. Another was the scene of his transfiguration. A third, even the memorable Calvary, was the place of his crucifixion. And now he stood on Olivet's elevated summit, and from thence ascended into heaven.

May 11.

CHRIST'S ASCENSION.

PART II.—*Acts i. 9.*

HAVING noticed the time and place of Christ's ascension, let us now consider the Redeemer's *engagements*, at the time of his ascension. He led his disciples out to Bethany, and then ascended

with them to the Mount of Olives : and having renewed the promise of the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, he stretched out his hands and blessed them, and was then received out of their sight. It was the great object of Christ's undertaking, to bless the world. His ministry was emphatically a ministry of blessing. The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. When he opened his mouth, it was invariably in blessing. And his whole active work and ministry consisted in going from place to place, to diffuse abroad the unsearchable riches of his grace. When he was maligned and reproached, in return, he blessed his enemies. And when fidelity to the souls of the hypocritical scribes and pharisees, compelled him to denounce their doom, and Jerusalem's ruin, it was with bitterest regret, and with tears that he said, "O that thou hadst known, in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace ; but now they are hidden from thine eyes." When he died, he employed his dying breath on behalf of his murderers. When he arose, it was with blessings in his heart and mouth towards his disciples. And now his earthly career and work are finished, by Christ spreading abroad his arms of unbounded beneficence and love, and blessing his disciples. No greater proof could be given that his pity and compassion for our race were as deep and extensive as ever. Then notice the *manner* of his ascension. It was local and visible. The eyes of the disciples were fixed upon

him. They beheld him raised up from their midst, until, encircled with the glorious cloud, he passed out of their sight. When God descended on Sinai, a cloud covered the mountain's top. When he went, as the guard and guide of Israel's hosts in the desert, a cloud was the symbol of his presence. When he consecrated the temple with his presence, it is said that "a *cloud* filled the house of the Lord." When Jesus was transfigured on Tabor, the whole mountain was covered with the cloud of the divine glory. And when the great day of the Lord shall arrive, he shall descend from heaven with clouds. It is indeed true of Jehovah Jesus, that "He maketh the clouds his chariot, and walketh on the wings of the wind."

May 12.

CHRIST'S ASCENSION.

PART III.—*Acts* i. 9.

DOUBTLESS the ascension of Christ was connected with the *Ministry of Angels*. They had been employed to announce his conception, to hail his birth, to console him in the wilderness, and to rejoice and publish his resurrection. It is not possible, then, that they could be unconcerned about his ascension into his glory. The disciples beheld the cloud; but, in connection with that cloud, who can tell

how many of the celestial hosts were employed to minister to the Lord of life and glory ! The chariots of God are twenty thousands, even thousands of angels : the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place. Thou hast ascended on high ; thou hast led captivity captive ; thou hast received gifts for men, yea for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them." (Ps. lxviii. 17, 18.) The above splendid quotation was evidently designed as a prophetic description of the Messiah's ascension. Hence the poet has beautifully said—

“ Cherubic legions guard him home,
And shout him welcome to the skies.”

The place to which Christ ascended was the *heaven of heavens*. The angels who addressed the astonished disciples, said that he was ascended *into heaven*. Christ said, “ I ascend to my Father, and to your Father, to my God and to your God.” God's throne is in the highest heavens, and to that hath the Father exalted him, above all principality and power, even to his own right hand, and hath said, “ Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool.” (Heb. i. 16.) When the martyr Stephen was expiring, he said, “ Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.” (Acts viii. 59.) And when John had a vision of the Lamb slain, “ a door was opened in heaven,” and he beheld him seated on

a throne, "and there was a rainbow round about him, in sight like unto an emerald." (Rev. iv. 1—4.)

May 13.

ASCENSION OF CHRIST.

PART IV.—*Acts i. 9.*

THE ascension of Jesus had been predicted in many of the Psalms of David, and by Daniel, as well also, by the Redeemer himself. Having seen the glorious event realised, let us now consider THE GREAT END AND DESIGN OF THAT ASCENSION. Jesus ascended that he might *carry on his mediatorial work* in heaven. He had finished all his engagements on earth, but now he had to appear in the holiest place, and sprinkle the throne of the eternal with his sacrificial blood, that it might be the sinners true mercy-seat, unto which we might appear with boldness of access, and obtain pardon and acceptance with God. Before that throne too, Jesus ever stands as the intercessor of his church, and the perpetual advocate of his people. Jesus ascended as the *Triumphant Conqueror* over all his enemies. He had been engaged in severe combat with the combined powers of earth and hell. Earth he had redeemed by his precious blood, and death and hell he had overcome by his glorious resurrection. Now therefore as the Bozrah conqueror, travelling

in the greatness of his strength, and mighty to save, he returns to his native kingdom and glory. He ascended that he might send down the *Holy Ghost*, and to communicate all the blessings of his grace. Hence his ascension has caused the heavens to drop as with fatness, and earth has received in copious showers the effusions of his love and grace. Him hath God highly exalted, to be a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance unto Israel and the remission of sins. He ascended that he might *exercise his rightful dominion over all worlds*. Now he must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet. As king of Zion, he rules in his church, and will do so until all his foes are confounded, and the earth resound with the music of his name, from the rising to the setting of the sun. Finally, Christ hath ascended, that he might *receive the spirits of his people unto himself*. He gives an abundant admission to his people into heaven, and places upon the heads of his saints, the crown of glory that fadeth not away. Let us never forget the exalted Saviour, — let our affections constantly ascend to him, — let us tread in his footsteps, that we may be sharers of his glory. And when we die, that we may believingly be enabled to commend our souls into his hands — and say, “Lord Jesus receive our spirits.”

May 14.

CHRIST OUR HELPER.

The Lord is my Helper.—Heb. xiii. 6.

UNDER all circumstances man is the creature of weakness and dependence: he is not sufficient for one moment's existence, much less felicity. Many foolishly, however, lean upon themselves, and are constantly reaping vanity and sorrow. Others lean upon their fellow-men; they trust in man, whose breath is in his nostrils, and hence they are the constant victims of anguish and disappointment. The Christian feels and rejoices in the sentiment, "The Lord is my Helper." Yes, Jehovah laid the redemption of the world upon him, because he is mighty—the whole structure of the church rests on him as its immovable basis and centre—all the believer's hopes, and blessings, and joys, are in him. When the cry of the perishing sinner reacheth his ears, his hand is immediately stretched out to help: when starving souls draw near to him, he helpeth them to the stores of his mercy and the abundance of his grace—when enemies assail his heaven-born sons, then they cry, and the Lord becometh their help and their shield. In affliction he helpeth them by his kindly sympathies;

"He knows what human sorrows mean,
For he hath felt the same."

He helpeth his people, too, in all the common and ordinary affairs of life. In duties he helpeth them, by imparting strength, and power sufficient for their right discharge. It is to the gracious help of Jesus that the believer constantly looks, and on which he always depends. How desirable that we should always feel the appropriate lines of the poet :—

“ Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on thee,
Leave, O leave me not alone,
Still support and comfort me :
All my trust on thee is stay'd,
All my help from thee I bring,
Cover my defenceless head
With the shadow of thy wing.”

May 15.

CHRIST OUR HELPER.

PART II.—*Heb.* xiii. 6.

JESUS, as the helper of his people, 'possesses all those qualifications which render his help desirable and important. The help which he affords is always efficient. It never falls below the exigencies and demands of his people. No case too needy, too intricate, or too apparently hopeless. All means and resources are his. His wisdom can never be baffled. His powerful arm can never be wearied.

His abundance can never be exhausted. The help he affords, is always *timely* and *seasonable*. He is ever nigh at hand, and never afar off; so that in all places and circumstances, he is ready to bless and save his people. His omnipresence qualifies him to meet the necessities of all his widely scattered flock. And he is to each and to all of them, "a very present help in trouble." He said to the apostles who were going into every country beneath heaven, "Lo I am with you alway even unto the end of the world." (Matt. xxviii. 20.) Finally we observe, that Jesus is an *unchanging* and *everlasting* help. In every age of the world, he has been the unfailing and unchanging help of his people. The prophets and fathers trusted in him, and never were confounded. Thousands now have committed their all into his care, and are persuaded that he will keep that which they have committed to him, till that day. And we may ever rest assured, that though the earth be shaken, and the mountains removed, yet the Lord, the Saviour, will remain the impregnable defence, and helper of his people. Blessed is the man who trusteth in him. Let this help be sought by constant prayer. As our help, may Jesus ever receive our unwavering confidence, our constant hope, and our grateful affection on earth, and be the theme of our song in the courts of the redeemed for ever.

May 16.

CHRIST A PROPHET.

That Prophet.—Acts iii, 21.

PETER is now concluding his address to the people, who were collected by the miracle he had wrought upon the lame man. In doing this, he exhibits Jesus unto them, as the person to whom Moses referred, when he said, "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me, him shall ye hear in all things, whatsoever he shall say unto you." As a prophet, Jesus therefore appeared in our world, and as such, he is to be believingly and affectionately regarded by his church and people. As a prophet, Jesus was richly qualified for his office, by the possession of the infinite stores of riches and wisdom. In Jesus all fulness dwelt, so that before his wise and omniscient eyes, all things were lucid and plain. He knew every thing from the beginning, and needed not that any man should teach him. As a prophet, Jesus possessed the entire and unbroken influences of the Holy Ghost. To other prophets, the Spirit was given by measure; to Jesus, the whole was given. The Spirit of God descended as a dove, and lighted upon him, so that he became the consecrated shrine of the Holy Ghost. As a prophet, Jesus ever possessed the Spirit of prophecy. It did not come upon him at specific seasons, or on

particular occasions, or for extraordinary purposes, but as the Spirit continually dwelt in him, he was qualified at all times, for the exhibition of his office, and the execution of his duty. As a prophet, Jesus has no successor. God, who in former times had spoken to the world by prophets, has now spoken to us by his son, and this is the last and most luminous economy, with which the world shall ever be favored. The canon of scripture is now completed. the revelation of the mind of God, is now perfect, we now enjoy meridian light, noon day splendour, and whosoever will not hearken to Jesus, as the great prophet of God, shall be destroyed with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.

May 17.

CHRIST A PROPHET.

PART II.—*Acts* iii. 23.

IN what way did Jesus execute the prophetic office? I.—He made known the mind of God to the people; he declared the whole will of God to men. Hence he instructed us as to the evil of sin, as to its dreadful effects, and as to man's total inability to cleanse his own heart, and to save his own soul. He instructed us as to the necessity of repentance, and the importance of regeneration

He also shewed us the only way of reconciliation and acceptance with the Father, and gave the most solid assurance that whosoever came to God by him, should in nowise be cast out. He also insisted upon his disciples cultivating holiness of heart and life, and was himself the great model as well as the great teacher of purity and truth. He taught also the doctrine of the soul's immortality, promised eternal life to his saints, and also made known the blessed certainty of a glorious resurrection. He hath left us a complete system of divinity; a perfect code of laws; and a clear chart of the way to everlasting blessedness. Now all who desire peace and purity on earth, and felicity in the eternal world, are directed by the Father of spirits, and the benign parent of the human race, "to hear him." As a prophet Jesus also *predicted future events*. He revealed several events, which related to himself. He told his disciples how that he should "suffer many things of the elders, chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day." (Matt. xvi. 21.) He also predicted how Judas would betray him, — how Peter would deny him, and how all would forsake him and flee. He foretold with particular precision, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the calamities of those days. He also predicted his own ascension, the outpouring of the Spirit at the day of pentecost, and the great increase in the church which should immediately follow. These predictions were fulfilled to the very

letter. Of those predictions which remain to be fulfilled, we may mention his own second advent, the resurrection of the dead, and the judgment of the world at the last day. It is our duty to reverence, and humbly sit at the feet of Jesus, that we may be instructed in all things which relate to the present and everlasting welfare of our souls. Happy for a guilty world, that his revelations are full of mercy and grace, and therefore that it is our highest interest to hear and to obey him.

May 18.

CHRIST A PROPHET.

PART III.—*Acts* iii. 23.

JESUS, although he is removed from our world, and is exalted far above all principalities and powers, still discharges his prophetic office. He ever lives the great and mighty prophet of his church. In effecting his prophetic work, he employs the ministry of his servants, and the influences of his Spirit. By the ambassadors of his word, the truths of the gospel are conveyed to men, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. He, as the head of the church, and King of Zion, appoints and calls those forth, who are to be the preachers of his gospel, and the expounders of his word. For this solemn and highly responsible work, he alone qualifies them

and sends them into their appointed spheres of labour. He furnishes them with the truths they shall declare, the only doctrines they shall preach. And thus by this divinely appointed instrumentality, does Jesus still abide in the discharge of his prophetic office. To render this instrumentality effective, he also employs the *influences of his Spirit*. By this holy agent, the word is made quick and powerful. By this, it becomes a polished two-edged sword. A mighty hammer breaking the rocky heart. A consuming fire, burning up the stubble of sin. While Jesus by his ministers, conveys the letter of the word to the ear, by his Spirit, he conveys the *life* of the word to the heart: thus making the gospel, "the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth." In this way, the heart is disposed, either being gently opened, as was Lydia's, or suddenly broken, as in the case of the three thousand Jerusalem sinners. By this same holy agency, does he lead his people into all truth, and teach them all things. In this way, does he fill them with all wisdom, and perfect them in all the knowledge of his will. Yes, Jesus still abides the prophet of his church. Let us imitate the happy and deeply interested Mary, who sat at his feet, hearing all his words. Thus shall we possess the one thing needful, the good part that shall never be taken from us.

May 19.

CHRIST THE TRUE TABERNACLE.

The True Tabernacle.—*Heb. viii. 2.*

THE ancient tabernacle was appointed by God, and all things connected with it were made according to the pattern God gave unto Moses in the holy mount. It was not only intended as an erection for the celebration of worship and sacrifice; but it was, like every other part of that dispensation, typical of the person and work of Christ. The apostle, in his discourse on the ancient institutions, in this epistle, shews that all those things were shadows of good things to come. As such, Christ is the substance of those observances; and “the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.” The resemblance between the tabernacle and Jesus will be evident, if we consider that the tabernacle was a divine erection. God planned it. It was formed by his express command and authority. Jesus was God’s gift to the world. He sent him forth. He, by the mysterious operations of the Holy Ghost, prepared him a body. And thus he was truly and essentially the Son of God. In his divinity, he was with God coequal; but in his humanity he was subordinate, and was in a tabernacle prepared and created of God. The tabernacle was the *residence* of deity. There was the cloud of his presence, the symbol of his glory.

So in Jesus God essentially dwells. In him was all the fulness of the godhead bodily. The eternal Logos was made flesh, and dwelt, literally tabernacled amongst us; and we beheld his glory, as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. (John i. 14.) Never did God give so striking a manifestation of his power and godhead, as in the person of Christ. Phillip said, "Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us." Jesus replied, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." The tabernacle was the place of communion between God and man. So is Jesus Christ. God has never held communion with sinful man, through any other medium. He speaks to us through his Son. He is reconciled to us through his Son. We are accepted in his Son. And no sinner can come to God, or enjoy God, but through the one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.

May 20.

CHRIST THE TRUE TABERNACLE.

PART II. — *Heb. viii. 2.*

WE have directed you to three general points of resemblance between the tabernacle and Jesus. But Christ is denominated the *true* tabernacle. That of old was the mere shadow, or figure, or

type. Christ is substantially what the tabernacle was only symbolically. The ancient tabernacle was only temporary, formed of perishing materials, and is passed away; Christ, the true tabernacle, is immortal, unchangeable, and will abide for ever. The glory displayed in the old tabernacle was limited and imperfect.—In Christ, all the glory of God was exhibited; in him we behold deity full orbed, in all his uncreated and infinite noon-day splendour. The first tabernacle was for one nation and people.—The second for all nations and kindreds, and people, and tongues. “For this we know and testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.” “And he is the propitiation not only for our sins, but also for the sins of the whole world.” In the first tabernacle were offered *animal sacrifices*, and all things were consecrated by their blood.—The second has been sanctified by the infinitely precious blood of Christ himself, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot. The services of the first tabernacle were ceremonious, expensive, and burdensome.—The services of the second, spiritual, gratuitous, and light. Let us then draw near to the true propitiatory, the real mercy-seat, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need. In Jesus we have pardon, acceptance, sanctification, communion with the Father, and eternal life.

May 21.

CHRIST THE FOUNDATION.

Other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.—1 Cor. iii. 11.

THE Apostle speaking of the believer, likens him “to a house, and as an habitation of God through the Spirit.” He is also likened to a temple, “know ye not that ye are the temple of God.” Now these metaphorical statements, shew the connection and propriety, of Christ being set forth as a foundation. Let us then first ascertain, *of what*, Christ is the foundation. Now Christ is the foundation of the sinner’s *acceptance* with God. God cannot be merciful to man, consistently with the demands of his holiness, justice, and truth, except in and through Jesus Christ. Christ’s holiness, obedience, and merits, are the only grounds on which God is propitious to the sinner : so that Jesus is the only foundation of pardoning mercy, and justifying grace. Christ is the foundation of the believer’s *peace*. Hence he is called, “Our peace.” (Eph. ii. 14.) Jesus came and preached peace. When he arose from the dead, he imparted peace to his disciples. “And being justified by faith, we have *peace* with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” He is the foundation of all sorts of peace. By him, angels are at peace with us. God is at peace with us. And we have peace with conscience, the peace of God

within us, which passeth all understanding. Christ is the foundation of *hope*. We are begotten again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Christ's blessed gospel has brought life and immortality to light. Christ's merits have laid a solid and honorable basis for their bestowment. And his great and precious promises respecting them, give the believer a hope unspeakably bright, and full of glory. Christ is the foundation of eternal life. He died, rose again, and ascended into heaven, that we might obtain eternal life. He gives unto his sheep eternal life. We have eternal life in his name. "And this is the record that God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in his son."

May 22.

CHRIST THE FOUNDATION.

PART II.—1 *Cor.* iii. 11.

WE have seen that Christ is the foundation of the believer's acceptance, peace, hope and eternal salvation. He is also the foundation of his collective and universal *Church*. The Church is likened to a temple and to a city, of which Jesus is the glorious basis. He is the rock on which his Church is built, and against which, the gates of hell shall never prevail. Holy men and prophets, and apostles are all stones in this superstructure, but Christ

alone is laid, as the foundation, who bears all its massy weight, on which it entirely rests. And whether we consider the church, in its militant state on earth, or in its glorified and triumphant state in heaven, Christ is the basis of the whole. Each and all of God's spiritual family, from the new-born babe on earth, to the most exalted beatific spirit in glory, rest wholly upon Christ as the foundation. And what where the DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERS of this foundation? Christ is God's *elect* and *precious* foundation,—he is the selected and chosen of God; and he is essentially and infinitely precious,—he is a *strong* foundation. Omnipotence is one of his attributes. He is the Almighty: both the wisdom and power of God. So strong that it is probable that myriads of worlds are upheld by him. He is a suitable foundation. In him God is glorified, and the sinner honorably saved. He is high enough to shed eternal lustre on all the perfections of the Deity, and low enough to meet the sinner's state, and amply to supply all his exigencies. He is a *universal* foundation. Hence a guilty world is to be directed to him, and every creature invited to build upon him. He is a *perpetual* foundation. In all ages, believers have rested upon him. Our parents were directed to him in the first promise; Abel built upon it, and died a martyr for his faith in him. Abraham built upon him, and seeing his day, though afar off, rejoiced and was glad. Prophets and all the holy men of old rested their hopes

on him, who in the fulness of the times should come, who is the Christ of God, blessed for evermore. And through all the ages which have passed since his actual appearance to the present, and through all the periods which shall elapse, from now, to the grand and final consummation, he is, and shall be, the one great, and only foundation.

May 23.

CHRIST THE FOUNDATION.

PART III.—1 Cor. iii. 2.

As a foundation Christ comes to us, as having been *tried*, and as having been always sufficient. How many have built upon mere *doctrines* and *sentiments*, upon *creeds* and *systems*, but in the day of distress when they wanted comfort, their foundation being only nominal, merely theoretical, they have been left in wretchedness and despondency. How many have built on the *abstract mercy* of God, but when their foundation was tested, they have found out that Jehovah is just, as well as merciful, and he will by no means clear the guilty. How many have built upon their own *works*, upon their *self-righteousness*, and have only been awakened time enough to discover, that all their goodness is as filthy rags. But all who have tried Jesus, have found him a sufficient foundation. And how ex-

tensively has he been tried. In all ages thousands have rested all their hopes upon him. He has been tried by all classes and grades of men. By the rich, and by the poor; by the learned, and by the illiterate; by the savage, and by the refined; by the moralist, and by the profligate; and they have all realised in him, an all sufficient foundation. He has proved all sufficient, for all times and places, and occurrences,—he has been tried in prosperity, and in adversity,—he has been tried in youth, and in old age,—he has been tried in health, and in sickness,—he has been tried in life, and in death. And in all diversities of state, they who have trusted in him have never been confounded. His sufficiency has been tested, under reproach, persecution, distress, at the stake, and at the block, and so strong has it been, that pain has been found as ease, and death in its most terrific forms embraced, in hope of a better resurrection. Let the christian abide on this foundation; be not moved from the hope of the gospel. The sinner's peace, happiness, and eternal well-being depends upon the acceptance, or rejection of this foundation.

May 24.

KINGSHIP OF JESUS.

There is another King, one Jesus.—Acts xvii. 7.

THE Kingship of Jesus was both extensively typified and predicted in the old testament scriptures.

Melchisedec was an eminent type of Jesus, combining in himself both the office of priest and king. David and Solomon too were both types of the royalty of Jesus. The prophets also predicted of him as the "King of Glory" (Ps. xxiv. 8.) "King of Zion." (Jer. viii. 19.) "A mighty King." (xi. 3.) He is called, "David their King." (Hosea iii. 5.) And "King over all the earth." (Zech. xiv. 9.) Christ also confessed to Pilate, that he was a king, but that his kingdom was not of this world. Considered in the divinity of his person, he is universal king. King of kings and Lord of lords. In this sense, his empire extends to heaven, and earth, and hell. All creatures, and all worlds belong to his illimitable empire, and of his dominion, there is no end. But we now especially consider him in his mediatorial office, as reigning in the midst of the Zion of his church. His kingdom consists of two branches; that of the *Spirits* of the just in heaven, and that of all true believers on earth. His palace is in glory, where he has his great and exalted throne, where the homage of countless attendants, is constantly paid to him. His laws and statutes are revealed in his word, and the gospel is his royal sceptre, the rod of his strength. The officers of his kingdom, are the pastors and teachers of his church, who are to publish his laws, and to enforce the discipline of his kingdom. All who truly believe in him, and unfeignedly love him, are his subjects; on the throne of their willing hearts he sits, and sways the sceptre

of his grace. It will thus appear, that his kingdom is not confined by local bounds, or geographical limits, but in whatever nation or country, or of whatever people or clime or colour, believers are found, there is his spiritual empire, there he reigns as King of his universal Zion.

May 25.

KINGSHIP OF JESUS.

PART II.—*Acts xvii. 7.*

JESUS Christ as a king, is possessed of the most illustrious distinctions and titles. He is the King *immortal*—he has life in himself—he ever liveth—he had no beginning of years, or end of days—he claims the prerogative of absolute immortality and self-existence—he is the “I am,”—the “Jehovah of Hosts,” and besides him there is none else. He is the King *invisible*. He once appeared in our world and tabernacled amongst us, and his glory was beheld, the glory as of the only begotten of the father, full of grace and truth, but now he is removed from our mortal vision having entered into the holiest place of all, where he ever appears in the presence of God for us. He is the King *Eternal*,—his reign shall be everlasting, and of his dominion there shall be no end. He is the King of *Kings*. His providence extends to all the affairs of earth

By him Kings reign. By him all the complex machinery of governments is overruled and directed. He is the King of glory. He dwelleth in glory. His throne is in the highest heaven. All the glorious hosts adore before him. All the angels of heaven worship him. For this King we should cultivate feelings of profoundest reverence and veneration. To him in all things we should be subject. His will is supreme and unchangeably binding in its obligations on all his disciples. The true christian, loves and fears, and adores Jesus as the King of Zion, and as head over all things to his Church.

May 26.

CHRIST A KING.

PART III.—*Acts xvii. 7.*

THE essential attributes of Jesus, such as his almighty power, unbounded wisdom, and eternal immutability, present him before us in all his unrivalled dignity and greatness. Let us now notice the moral features of his kingly rule and authority. First of all we must consider him as a *righteous* and *equitable* king. He is the holy and just one. He reigns not as a usurper, his dominions is not based on iniquity, but in eternal righteousness and truth. His name is the "Lord our righteousness." "A

sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of his kingdom." "Righteousness is the girdle of his loins." He is a *bountiful* and *benevolent* king. His goodness is associated with all his acts, and all his engagements, — his goodness is over all his works. He reigns to diffuse his goodness,—

“ Blessings abound where’er he reigns,
The pris’ner leaps to lose his chains,
The weary find eternal rest,
And all the sons of want are blest.”

He is also a *gracious* and *merciful* king. Grace is poured into his lips,—he is full of grace and truth,—the sceptre he sways is a sceptre of mercy,—he delighteth in mercy,—his mercy extends to his greatest enemies. It abounded to Saul of Tarsus as a pattern, or example of what it could effect, and to whom it could extend. Those whom we should have supposed, had totally excluded themselves, from the possibility of his favour, were the first to whom the gospel message of mercy and grace was sent. Remission of sins was to be preached to all nations, but first of all, “beginning at Jerusalem.” The throne he now occupies is one of grace, to which the vilest may have access by repentance and faith, and obtain mercy and grace to help them in time of need. Let the children of Zion be joyful in their king. Let the sinner be exhorted to “kiss the Son lest he be angry, and he perish from the way” when his anger is kindled *but*

a little." (Ps. ii. 11.) The Lord reigneth let the earth rejoice, and let the inhabitants thereof be glad.

May 27.

CHRIST TYPIFIED BY JACOB'S LADDER.

And behold a ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven.—Gen. xxviii. 12.

THIS was the vision that Jacob had when he was at Bethel. It seems that God intended by it, to exhibit to the Patriarch, the nature of Providence, and the constant intercourse which is kept up between heaven and earth, through the ministry of angels. But it appears also to have been intended to typify the Saviour, and to shew the medium which God has appointed, for holding intercourse with our guilty world, and the only way by which sinners can have access to his presence and favour. The ladder was *set upon the earth*. Jesus in the fulness of the times, came forth to dwell upon the earth. On earth he lived, and taught, and performed his miracles, and died for sin, and rose again for our justification. It behoved Christ to become man, and to tabernacle amongst us. Then this ladder *reached to heaven*. Here the glory and deity of Christ are presented to our view. While he was man with man, he was also God with God.

While he deigned to dwell on earth, he was still Lord of angels, and the adored of heaven. This is very strikingly set forth by Jesus himself. "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man who is in heaven." (John iii. 13.) The ladder *filled up the whole distance* between earth and heaven. So Jesus is a perfect and glorious way of communication between man and God, between earth and heaven. He is the way to the Father, and no man cometh to God but by him. He is the way to eternal life, and all who receive and trust in him, shall be everlastingly saved. Behold the *Lord stood above the ladder*, intimating the Divine satisfaction and complacency in the mediator. God is well pleased in his son, both as it respects his person, work, and salvation. And God is ready to save to the uttermost, all who come unto him by Christ. He stands, therefore, at the head of the ladder, to accept, to justify, and to adopt into his family, all who believe in the name of his son. Angels were seen ascending and descending upon it; they especially waited upon the Saviour, they hailed his birth, ministered to him at his temptation and agony, and are all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation.

May 28.

CHRIST AT THE MARRIAGE OF CANA.

And both Jesus was called and his disciple to the marriage.—John ii. 2.

MARRIAGE was instituted by God, during human innocency in Paradise. It is therefore a contract bearing the Divine impress, and one on which may be expected the Divine blessing. Man's physiological nature, and his moral feelings, are evidently formed to harmonise with this institution. No human confederation is so close in its nature, or so important in its character as this. Hence marriage is the most happy or most disastrous of all alliances. To render it productive of conjugal felicity, there should be a natural propriety, in the dispositions, ages, and pursuits of those, who are united in its hallowed bonds. But most of all, it is desirable, that there should be oneness of mind in matters of religion, that they may be fellow helpers of each other's faith, and heirs together of the grace of life. Nothing has been more injurious to the interests of true religion, nothing has dishonored Jesus more, or has been more productive of apostacy from Christ's holy cause, than the union of believers with unbelievers. It seems obvious that such unions cannot produce any thing, but contentions, strife, and every evil work. If we are anxious to obtain the smile of heaven on the con-

jugal alliance, Jesus must be invited to the marriage. His presence and blessing will lay a solid foundation, for domestic peace and prosperity. If he be thus acknowledged and honored, he will direct all our steps, guide us by a right way, and grant unto us all the desires of our heart. But if invited to the marriage festival, will he attend? Will Christ form one of a wedding company? He did so in the day of his humanity upon earth, and it will be subsequently seen, that the joys of that marriage were sanctified, and distinguished by the first miracle the Saviour ever wrought.

May 29.

CHRIST'S FIRST MIRACLE.

*This beginning of miracles, did Jesus in Cana of Galilee.
John ii. 11.*

AND this miracle was performed at a marriage. His affectionate and pious mother was present to witness it. It took place very unexpectedly and was performed without any show or ostentation. The circumstances of the case were these. Christ honored a marriage festival at Cana, with his presence. The wine used, which was most likely the pure sweet, unintoxicating juice of the grape, was exhausted. And a further supply was necessary for the demands of the guests. Jesus therefore

commanded that the water pots should be filled with water and they were filled to the brim. It was then borne to the governor of the feast, when the miracle was discovered, and the guests partook of this production of Christ's supernatural power. In this miracle, we are called to behold the great condescension and grace of the Son of God. Here we behold the Lord of heaven and earth, in familiar intercourse with his creatures. That intercourse was distinguished by all that was compassionate, and tender, and beneficent, on the part of Jesus. Did not this miracle too, seem symbolical of those enriching blessings which he came to bestow on the souls of men. Men were impoverished, wretched, and ready to perish; he came to present unto them the cup of blessing, the wine of salvation, and "to invite them to buy wine and milk, without money and without price." Let the subject excite in every fainting breast, an ardent longing after the blessings of the gospel of Christ. And in all our social festivities of innocent joy, let Jesus be an invited guest, his presence will sweeten every pleasure, irradiate every scene, and if we honor him, he will not allow us to want for the happiest sources of enjoyment, but always we shall have reason to exclaim, "the best wine is kept until now."

May 30.

CHRIST'S RELATIVES.

*Whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my
Father, and my Sister, and my Mother.*

Mark iii. 35.

JESUS exemplified the reality and supremacy of his piety in every sphere in which he moved, and in every relationship in his life, which he filled. To his parents he was affectionate and obedient, and to all men he was courteous and kind. It is said of him when a youth, that he, "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." To his weeping mother he displayed the aboundings of his compassionate regards, when expiring on the cross, and found for her a friend and protector, in the person of the beloved John. We cannot then suppose that the affectionate Jesus, would be deficient in the special attachments of relative life. But he came from heaven to earth to be the friend and saviour of our race, and the kinsman of every human being. Therefore when the multitude said to him, "Behold thy mother, and thy brethren, (most likely cousins) without seek thee," he said gazing with deepest interest on the assembly, "Behold my mother, and my brethren, for whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and my mother." Jesus is truly united by the ties of flesh to every child of

man. There is but one common human nature whatever may be the diversity of colour, or of appearance, and that nature Christ assumed, and thus became identically the relative of all mankind. But it is only those who do the will of God, with whom he is especially united, and to whom he is more particularly attached. With these he is of one Spirit, he is of one heart, and of one pursuit. These are joint heirs with Christ, participants of the Father's complacent favour, and shall finally enjoy with him, the glory which he had before the world was. This bond of union which unites Jesus and believers so closely together, is that of obedience to the commands of God. But this obedience must resemble Christ's. It must be affectionate, cheerful, constant, and persevering, It must be our delight to do his will; the obedience of faith, which works by love, and purifies the heart. Happy they, who are thus Christ's relatives indeed, and of a truth!

May 31.

CHRIST A SURETY.

The surety of a better testament.—Heb. vii.

A SURETY is one who obligates himself to see certain engagements fulfilled, and who is personally accountable for their fulfilment. Jesus became a

surety between God and man. He engaged to discharge all the obligations to which man was liable,—he engaged to see all the claims of God amply met and ratified, — he became responsible for all that man owed, for the full and entire settlement of the vast amount. This involved perfect obedience to the Divine law, which he magnified and made gloriously honourable. This involved bearing the curse of the law, what he did by becoming a curse for us. (Gal. iii. 13.) As such he took the place of the transgressors, was bruised for our iniquities, endured the infliction of Divine wrath in his own sacred person, the chastisement of our peace being laid upon him, that by his stripes we might be healed. Thus, he bore our sins in his own body on the tree. But this only includes his engagements on our behalf with God. As surety he became pledged on the part of the Deity to bestow upon all believers the benefits of salvation. “Thus God exalted him as a prince and a saviour to give repentance unto Israel and remission of sins.” Thus too before he suffered, he offered up that sublime intercessory prayer to his Father, that his people might be sanctified and preserved from the evils of the world, and finally participate with himself in the glory which he had with the Father before the world was. Hence as the surety on the part of God to man, he has engaged to give unto his sheep eternal glory, that where he is, there they shall be also. As our

surety, he is possessed of infinite ability to execute all his engagements, and his mind is one, and changeth not, the same yesterday, to day, and for ever. If Christ be such a surety, then let the penitent sinner commit all his concerns into his hands. Christ is able and willing to save unto the uttermost all who come unto God by him. Let the believer implicitly trust him in weakness, in temptations, in trials, in afflictions, and in death itself, seeing that he ever liveth to keep and strengthen his people here, and has promised after death, glory, immortality, and eternal life. The impenitent sinner who rejecteth this surety, must stand without advocate before the inexorable throne, and bear the doom his iniquity has justly demerited.

June 1.

CHRIST THE ANGEL OF THE LORD.

The angel of God.—Gen. xxi. 17.

THE term angel signifies messenger, and is descriptive rather of office, than of essence or character. There are many passages where the name is used in such a way, that it cannot possibly be applied to any created intelligence, however great and dignified. Jesus is styled the Angel of Jehovah, the Angel of his presence, the Angel of his Covenant, none of which titles are applied to the created

spirits, who worship before God. It is quite impossible to understand many of the ancient appearances, only as applicable to the Son of God. The angel who appeared to Hagar, said to her of Ishmael, "I will make him a great nation." The angel who appeared to Abraham, said, "lay not thine hand upon the lad, for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me." So also the angel that wrestled with Jacob is called by the prophet Hosea, the Lord of Hosts; and it is said, Jacob had power with God, and prevailed. The angel who appeared to Moses, out of the midst of the bush, afterwards claimed the essential and incommunicable name of Jehovah, and said, "I AM THAT I AM." There are many other appearances specified, which can only be applied to Christ; the uncreated angel of Jehovah's presence, the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person. Over all other angels, Jesus hath an infinite pre-eminence. They are finite beings, he is the Lord, infinite in all his perfections, and by whom angels were created. He is an angel, only in reference to the mediatorial work which he undertook, as the voluntary Redeemer of the world, as a messenger from heaven to earth, from God to man. He is an angel entirely for our welfare and salvation, as such let us receive him as the true messenger of mercy, as our only covenant head, and as our infallible guide to eternal glory.

June 2.

CHRIST THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE.

Pearl of great price.—Matt. xiii. 46.

No language employed by men or angels can ever *adequately* describe the *nature, worth, and excellency* of the Lord Jesus Christ!—

“All are too mean to speak His worth—

Too mean to set our Saviour forth.”

The most beautiful and valuable productions of nature, have indeed been metaphorically employed by the sacred writers, to set forth in some degree; the character of this “DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS”—and here, the blessed Redeemer is represented to us, under the beautiful figure of a “*Pearl of great price.*”—PEARLS have in all ages been in great request, as forming some of the most costly ornaments worn by the rich and great—and such is the traffic in those articles of luxury, that many confine their dealings to them alone—and such persons are known only as “*Pearl Merchants.*” Although *Pearls* are indeed *very numerous*, the far greater number being *small*, are (comparatively) of little value. But when the Merchant obtains one of *extraordinary size*, and of *exquisite form and beauty*—he knows he possesses something *precious*—an article of commerce, that will command a *great price*! It is to a *Pearl* of this description, (*being exceed-*

ingly rare) the metaphor is employed. As the Merchant (stimulated by his thirst after the gold that perisheth) employs his utmost efforts in procuring objects, so much *coveted*, and so *highly prized*. So it is with the *sinner*, who by the influence of the Holy Spirit, has been brought to discern his real state of *spiritual wretchedness* and *misery*—and enabled by *faith* to see in the blessed Jesus *alone*—*all* that will make him *truly rich* and *happy* in *time* and to *all eternity*!—His utmost energies will be employed, in order to *possess* this *Pearl* of inestimable price ! O yes ! it is a *Pearl* indeed, far above *all price* ! The *wealth of worlds* could not *purchase it* ! !—No ! blessed be God, it is His own *invaluable* and *unspeakable* gift. “For God so loved the World, that He gave His only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in Him, should not *perish*, but have *everlasting life* ! ”

June 3.

CHRIST THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE.

PART II.—*Matt.* xiii. 46.

Now to possess this invaluable Pearl, ought to be the one great pursuit of life. And it is exceedingly consolatory to know, that if we earnestly seek, in the way of God's appointment, we shall assuredly obtain it. But we can never secure it, without

diligent and persevering effort. We must labour for the bread of life. We must strive to enter in at the straight gate. We must take the kingdom of heaven by violence, for the violent seize it by force. When we seek the Lord with all our hearts, then he will be found of us. In obtaining the Pearl of great price, *sacrifices* will be necessary. We shall be called to sell all that we possess. That is all that is incompatible with the love of God. All inordinate self love. All idolatrous attachments to the world. All the love of the pleasures of sense. In fact, our entire and undivided hearts must be surrendered to God, and only then can we possess the inestimable Pearl. If any man love houses or lands, or wife or children, or his own life, more than Christ, he is not worthy of him, nor can he be his disciple. Now this Pearl is only to be found in the *glorious gospel* of the blessed God. In the gospel, Christ is revealed and offered to men. Here he invites men to come unto him and have life. And all who receive that gospel by faith shall find Jesus, and be enriched with the unsearchable treasures of his grace. For this Pearl there is no substitute. Without it, whatever we may possess, we are poor, and blind, and miserable, and lost; with it, of whatever earthly good we may be destitute, we are rich and happy, and are heirs of God, and of eternal glory. If this Pearl is ours, how carefully we should *secure it*. There are malignant spirits abroad, whose business it is to rob us. Having received Christ

Jesus by faith, let us be careful to walk in him. Hold fast that which you have, and let no man take your crown. If this pearl is precious now, how much more so will it be in death, at the judgment, and through all eternity.

June 4.

CHRIST RAISING THE DAUGHTER OF JAIRUS.

And he took her by the hand and the maid arose.

Matt. ix. 25.

PERSONS of all ranks and conditions in life, fall before the sword of the King of terrors. We do not feel much astonished when the aged and infirm become his victims, but how often are we surprised by his fatal attacks upon the strong and youthful of our race, and whose sun goes down while it is yet day. Ah! death has made all ages his own. In the place of sepulchres, we see tombs of every size, and for every stage in life, from the infant of a day, to the aged who are emphatically full of years. Here we have presented before us, one of those affecting scenes, which so often occurs. A Ruler with only one child, that child an affectionate and dearly beloved daughter, is seized by some distressing and painful disease. He immediately hastens to Jesus, and lays his case before him, and

while he stated, that by that time most likely she was dead, yet he exercised so much faith in the Redeemer, that he said, "but come and lay thine hand upon her, and she shall live." Here was a case which greatly honored the Saviour; here was no doubt, or fear as to the result; here was no suspecting the Divinity of Christ's mission, no limiting of his power. He therefore at once, without reluctance or delay, arose, and with his disciples came to the ruler's house. The fears of the Ruler had been too well founded, for his daughter had indeed expired. And as was the custom of those times, a number of individuals had assembled, who were wailing greatly for the deceased. Doubtless the Father's faith would now give way, therefore Jesus said, "Fear not, believe only, and she shall be made whole." It is true her case was now humanly speaking, utterly hopeless, and so the people laughed Jesus to scorn; but with Christ all things are possible, if we can but believe. He now therefore selects three disciples, Peter, James, and John, to be the witnesses on the occasion, and with the father and mother present, he prepares to exert his omnific power, in restoring the daughter to life.

June 5.

CHRIST RAISING THE DAUGHTER OF JAIRUS.

PART II. — *Matt. ix. 25.*

WE are now called to survey the striking scene in the Ruler's house. There, prostrate and inanimate, lay the daughter, the senses closed, the whole frame cold and lifeless, and the intellectual and immortal spirit gone into the eternal state. According to the natural order of things, she had become the victim of a monarch, who would firmly hold his grasp, until the resurrection at the last day. The agonised parents were there too; doubtless all the kindly associations of past days, were deeply affecting them, and they were now waiting the result of Christ's visit, with the most deep toned and conflicting feelings of hope and fear. The three disciples had often seen the stupendous miracles wrought by Jesus, but never had they witnessed the exertion of his power over the spirits of those departed into the invisible world. Here then was to be a fresh display of that Divine energy, which extended to all events, and to all worlds. While the spectators silently and intently gaze, Jesus speaks, "Maid, arise!" And then he took her by the hand, and she arose. Death heard the Almighty word; at the Saviour's bidding, relinquished his hold, and the corpse became animated

again, and she arose, not the subject of the malady whereof she died, but in all the soundness of health, and the bloom of youth. How loudly does the subject call upon parents, to feel deeply solicitous for the welfare of their children. Are not our offspring dead in trespasses and sins? Are they not in imminent peril of everlasting ruin? And unto whom shall we apply, but unto Jesus? O let us bear them upon the arms of believing prayer, and affectionately and earnestly solicit his gracious and Almighty regards. Christ will be well pleased with holy importunity on their behalf, and is it too much to say, that the results will be according to our faith? We see in this glorious miracle, the most striking evidence of the Redeemer's power and Godhead. No one possesses power over the keys of life and death, but he who is the true and only living God, who is over all, blessed for evermore. And finally, what a solid foundation is laid, for strong faith and hope as to the resurrection of our bodies at the last day. Yes, Jesus has only to speak, and every sepulchre will be unbarred, and the ashes of the slumbering saints, shall be raised to immortality and eternal life.

June 6.

CHRIST A LAWGIVER.

The Lord is our Lawgiver.—Isaiah xxxiii. 22.

JESUS came into the world, to be the sum and

substance of all the types and shadows, and to abrogate those observances appointed under the Levitical economy. Thus the law of ceremonies he hath for ever abolished. The moral law he came to fulfil in his own person and life, and he magnified all its enactments, and made it honourable. By his obedience to the law, he laid the basis of our recovery from the condemnation and curse of the law. But he also came to give laws to the world; to be the Lawgiver of his church, and of the christian dispensation to the end of time. He has therefore spiritualised the ten commandments, and given them again to his people. It is impossible to read his Divine sermon on the mount, and not perceive, that that law is as binding as ever. Indeed, that law is founded in the unalterable nature and propriety of things, and is a transcript of the Divine mind, therefore will never be annihilated. Then Jesus has not only spiritualised this law, and renewed it afresh, but he has also given unto us, the law of *universal love and mercy* to men. We are to love our enemies — to pray for those who curse and revile us — and to be merciful, even as he our Lord is merciful. Then he has also given to us the law of *Faith*. Hence we read of the law of faith, and the word of faith. And Christ seemed to suspend all his blessings upon obedience to this law. “If thou canst but believe, all things are possible.” “Be it unto thee according to thy faith.” “He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved.” So

Christ also has given unto us the law of *Ordinances*. He hath established the ordinance of a preached gospel, with which, he has pledged his presence to the end of the world. He also instituted the ordinance of *Baptism*, and united it with believing; so that it must exist so long as the law of faith is enforced, and must be its invariable accompaniment. Then he appointed too, the ordinance of the *supper*, by which we commemorate his dying love, and have mutual fellowship with him, till he come again.

June 7.

CHRIST A PHYSICIAN.

They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.—Matt. ix. 12.

IN the application of this proverb to himself, Jesus evidently professed to be a physician, and his whole ministerial career will establish that profession. Christ proved himself to be a physician of the body. He cured ail sorts of diseases;—dropsies, fevers, palsies, blindness, deafness, leprosies, bloody-issues, and dumbness, all fled before his healing power. It mattered not how deep, how complicated, how universal, or of how long standing, he never failed in restoring to perfect health and soundness. Many cases which were humanly speaking hopeless, he restored by the word of his power

His power was so extensive, that even death was forced to yield his prey at his command. One he brought to life from the bed on which she had just expired—a second as they were bearing him to the place of burial—and a third after he had been entombed, heard his voice, and lived, and came forth. Jesus does not now employ his miraculous influence in healing the diseases of the body, but still his ability is the same. And though we are not called to expect his supernatural interposition in curing our bodily diseases, yet all human means will fail, without his blessing. While we call for the physician then to apply the cooling oil, or to administer the restoring balm, it is indispensable, that by prayer and supplication, we make known our requests unto Christ. To expect healing from the skill of a physician, or the power of medicine, without his blessing is practical atheism. To depend upon spiritual influence for the removal of bodily ills is fanaticism. To use the means and supplicate his blessing, is a course, consistent alike with reason and religion. Jesus sympathises with all his people in affliction, and sanctifies all their trials and sufferings to their present welfare, and future glory.

June 8.

CHRIST A PHYSICIAN.

PART II.—*Matt. ix. 12.*

WE have seen that Jesus was a celebrated physi-

cian of the body, we now observe that he was equally successful in healing the maladies of the *mind*. In the wonder-working days of his flesh, he healed all sorts and degrees of mental and moral diseases. He cured the lunatic boy—he cured the demoniac, who dwelt among the tombs, and brought him to sit at his feet clothed, and in his right mind. But he also proved himself the physician of the *soul*. The soul of man is as subject to disease as the body. Every faculty is impaired; every power disordered; the plague spot is upon it; the leprosy defiles it; the fever consumes it; it is affected with the torpid paralysis. The eyes of the mind are blinded; the ears stopped, and the tongue is speechless. The afflictions of the soul are hereditary, complicated, deep seated, universally prevalent, painful, loathsome, and absolutely fatal. They never exhaust their strength, and cure themselves, neither are they curable by any human agency whatever. Now of these otherwise incurable maladies, Jesus is the efficient physician. His *knowledge* is *infinite*, therefore he knows the cause, the progress, and the precise state of the disease of the human heart. His *power* is *almighty*; there is nothing too hard for him to effect—he can eradicate the most virulent and confirmed disorders of the soul—his *tenderness* is *inexpressible*, he deeply commiserates the misery of sin-sick souls—his bowels yearn over them—his heart is full of tenderness towards them—he does not want an

application from them, but he seeks to heal and says, "wilt thou be made whole?" His *terms* are *astonishing* — he heals without money, and without price — all he desires is the use of his medicines, and humble attention to the prescriptions he gives. His *success* is *infallible* — he never fails to effect a cure — none ever sought his aid in vain. Though death had already commenced its ruinous work upon the dying malefactor, yet one word of his healed the malady of his soul, and saved him from the jaws of eternal death, and made him meet for the healthy abodes of the heavenly paradise.

June 9.

CHRIST A PHYSICIAN.

PART III.—*Matt.* ix. 12.

As a Physician, Christ's invitations are universal. He does not confine his practice to any grade or class of society: the world is his hospital; and all mankind may become his patients: the poor are alike welcome with the rich: he healeth all who come unto him. In curing the diseases of the soul, he employs the *agency of his word*. It is said he sent his word, and healed them: the word contains a revelation both of the disease and mode of cure: the word is emphatically the word of salvation—the word of life. He also employs

the *catholicon* of his blood: the blood of Jesus is the true balm of Gilead—that in which alone we have redemption, even the forgiveness of sin. It is this which speaks peace to the guilty mind, and which cleanseth from all unrighteousness. Both the word and blood of Jesus are applied to the mind by the *influences* of his *Spirit*. It is the Spirit's prerogative to convince of sin—to embitter sin to the soul, and to deliver from its painful and destructive consequences. The Spirit reveals the word to the mind, and applies the precious blood of Christ to the heart, and thus the malady is removed, and the soul is made whole. The cure which Christ imparts to the sin-sick soul is radical, universal, and abiding. He heals every wound, and restores every faculty: he gives beauty for deformity; strength for weakness; and blooming health for weakness and decay. How important that we ascertain our true state and condition. Hath he healed us? have we been convicted of sin—have we loathed it—and have we been delivered from it? Have we the signs of spiritual health upon us? do we live in the exercise of godliness? is the pain and smart, arising from consciousness of sin, removed? have we the indwelling of the Spirit testifying that we are the sons of God? Let spiritual health be carefully cultivated. Avoid all that is pernicious to the soul. Cherish the influences of the Spirit, and thus grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the

Lord Jesus Christ. The spiritually sick, who despise this Physician, must inevitably perish. There is no other balm in Gilead, nor any other Physician there.

June 10.

CHRIST A LEADER.

A Leader to the People.—Isaiah lv. 4.

OF Jesus it was said, that he was sent to guide our feet into the way of peace. Mankind had all erred and strayed from God, and had wandered into the tractless mazes of ignorance and misery. Utterly unable to retrace their steps, they must inevitably have perished, had not the mercy of God interposed for them. In this important human emergency, God in his matchless love, withheld not his son, but sent him forth to be “a *Leader* to the people.” Christ is eminently qualified for this work. His knowledge and wisdom are infinite, all in heaven, and earth, and hell, are perfectly and clearly before his eyes. He dwells in cloudless light; he is himself truly the light, and in him is no darkness at all. So that confusion, or error, can never frustrate his engagements. He sees all things from the beginning. All events in all worlds, both in eternity and time, are plainly before him. Who then so well qualified to lead as Jesus? The Allwise, and infallible Creator and

Ruler of all things ! Consider *from what, and to what*, Jesus leads all his people. He leads them from darkness, and the regions of death, to the light of gospel day, and the way of spiritual and eternal life. He leads them from error to truth. From wretchedness to comfort and peace. From condemnation to Divine acceptance. From vassalage to freedom. From the curse of the law, to the blessings of the gospel, and from the verge of perdition, to the way of everlasting salvation. He leads them from sin to holiness, from danger to safety, and from hell to heaven. This leading commences in the day of the soul's conversion, when with prayer and supplication, the penitent earnestly desires to find Jesus, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets wrote. When Christ has opened the eyes, and changed the heart, then as his disciples, they arise and follow him. And as his people, and the sheep of his pasture, he leadeth them into all the pastures of his ordinances, and into all the paths of progressive holiness, and finally he leads them to his kingdom, and eternal glory.

June 11.

CHRIST A LEADER.

PART II.—*Isaiah* lv. 4.

JESUS employs a diversity of means, in leading

his people to glory. Among these, we may notice, the *directions of his holy word*. For this very end, has he given us the Scriptures, that they may enlighten our minds, and lead our feet into the way of salvation. It is here that Christ in his person, offices, and work, is made known to the sinner. It was this, that made Timothy wise unto salvation. And this word is particularly designated the word of Christ, and the word of salvation. It was the preaching of this word that led the Samaritans to the true knowledge of Christ. And it was the reading and expounding of this word, that led the Eunuch to believe, that Jesus was the Son of God, and to be baptised in his name. Jesus also leads his people, by his own *illustrious example*. He has passed before us, as our exemplar and model; he has left the impress of his own footsteps, which we are called to imitate. Hence, he leads, by the attractive influence of his example, by causing his people to "look unto him, the author and finisher of their faith." Finally, Jesus leads by the *influences of his Spirit*. He said, the Spirit shall lead you into all truth. Hence, he sends down his Holy Spirit into the hearts of his people, to enlighten, to soften, to purify, and to carry on the work of grace, until they are fully meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, "For as many as are the Sons of God, are led by the Spirit of God." It is by the Spirit, that Christ is exhibited attractively before the mind. And it is by the Spirit, that the

heart is made affectionately willing, and the feet readily obedient to follow the Lamb, whithersoever he goeth. Let us then follow on to know the Lord, to listen to his voice, that we may never perish, but finally receive eternal life.

June 12.

CHRIST THE CITY OF REFUGE.

Who have fled for refuge.—Heb. vi. 18.

THE cities of refuge under the ancient economy very strikingly typified the person and work of Christ. What they were to the man-slayer, Jesus is pre-eminently to the sinner. All the circumstances of these cities seem adapted to lead the mind to some blessed peculiarity connected with Christ, and the gospel way of salvation. The *names* of these cities first demand our consideration, one of these was called KEDESH, which signifies “holy.” Now Jesus is truly the holy one of Israel—the immaculate Son of God. And his work and designs are inseparably connected with the interests of holiness. Another was called SHECHEM, which signifies “shoulder.” Now Christ is the appointed bearer of the sinners burden; he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.” He hath the key of David involving universal government upon his shoulder. Another of the cities was called HE-

BRON, signifying “fellowship.” And Christ is the only medium of the sinner’s access to God and fellowship with him. In any other way, or by any other medium, we should assuredly be rejected. God is well pleased with us only through his Son, who hath magnified the law and made it honorable. Another city was termed BEZER, which signifies a “strong hold.” Now Christ is often thus represented; he is the strong hold, provided for the prisoners of hope—he is our strong hold in the day of trouble—he is a strong hold to all them that trust in him. Another city was styled RAMOTH, which signifies “Exaltation.” Now Jesus was the exalted Son of God, and the exalted Prince of Israel. Besides, Christ’s work designed the exaltation of man to holiness and eternal glory. The sixth and last was named GOLAN, which signifies “Exultation and Joy,” Jesus is the joy of believers on earth, and the joy of celestial spirits in the heavenly world. How applicable were all these appellations to the person and work of Christ.

June 13.

CHRIST THE CITY OF REFUGE.

PART II.—*Heb. vi. 18.*

HAVING seen how appropriately these cities were designated, let us now consider their de-

sign. They were provided for the security and shelter of the man-slayer, for his protection from the avenger of blood. Having got within the gates, his life was effectually delivered. Jesus is our Refuge from the curse of the law and from eternal death. Out of him we are liable to be overtaken and surprised by divine wrath, which abideth on every unbeliever. In Jesus the soul is freed from condemnation, and none can harm it, or separate it from his love. The *situation* of these cities also demand attention — they were built on high eminences, so that they were visible afar off. Jesus, our divine Refuge, in like manner, is lifted up on the pole of the gospel, his name and virtues being proclaimed by his appointed heralds, that all mankind may know the joyful sound. The *roads* to these cities were open, and kept in good repair; they were not less than fifty-six feet wide; and bridges were thrown across intervening rivulets and brooks. The way of salvation is spiritually narrow, and its entrance is represented as a “strait gate:” but, while it is so as to character, yet as to accessibility it is wide enough for the world. The way into Christ is so narrow as to exclude all pharisees, formalists, and impenitent sinners; but it is wide enough for the vilest who sincerely, by repentance, flee to Christ for salvation. The cities were so *placed* that some of them might be reached in a few hours — In like manner, Christ

is a refuge near at hand, and not afar off: he is near to all them who call upon him in sincerity and in truth. The seeking sinner need not inquire who shall ascend to bring Christ down, or who shall descend to fetch Christ up?—"The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thine heart, that is, the word of faith which we preach, that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved!" (Rom. x. 8, 9.)

June 14.

CHRIST THE CITY OF REFUGE.

PART III.—*Heb.* vi. 18.

THE roads to the cities of refuge, were not only wide, and kept in good repair, but also at every turning and cross road, there was a *post erected*, pointing the right way to the refuge. Now all the precepts and counsels of the holy word, are so many way posts to direct us to Christ. All the exhortations and invitations of the gospel, together with all its institutions and ordinances, are appointed expressly to direct us to Christ. And so full and ample are these directions, that a wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein. The gates of the cities of refuge *stood open night and day* And

Christ is ever accessible to the repenting sinner. He ever waits to be gracious; his ear is never closed against the cry of misery; his heart is ever open, and though myriads have found it to overflow with compassion and mercy, it is still as widely expanded as ever, and whoever comes unto him, he will in no wise cast out. The *manslayer* was to *abide in the city*, until the death of the high priest. The believer in like manner, must abide in Christ, or he cannot be saved. There is however this difference, of old, the manslayer remained till the death of the high priest, but believers must remain faithful until their own death; our High priest never dieth, but ever liveth to make intercession for us. Hence also it was, if the manslayer were found without the precincts of the city, he might legally be cut off; so if any man draw back from Christ, God will have no pleasure in him. He only that abideth to the end shall be saved. Let the christian rejoice in the security he possesses in and through Christ. What a source of grateful joy, does the retrospect yield, and what felicitous hope does the prospect afford. Let the sinner flee to Christ. Flee *earnestly*, seeing all is at stake. Let him flee *immediately*, seeing that the Avenger is at his heels, and the Judge is at the door. And let him flee to *none* but *Jesus*, seeing he is the only refuge from *sin* here, and the wrath which is to come.

June 15.

CHRIST, IMMANUEL.

Immanuel.—Isaiah vii. 14.

THAT this title was designed for Jesus, is obvious, from its direct application to him, when the angel of the Lord announced to Joseph, the conception of Christ, and the name by which he should be called. (Matt. i. 20–23.) The word signifies, “God with us.” The title obviously includes the proper Deity of Christ, and this accords with the striking distinctions, illustrious perfections, and glorious works which are in other parts of the Divine word, ascribed to the Saviour. In him it is said, “Dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” And that he thought it not robbery to be “equal with God.” But the title includes more than his Divinity, it is “God *with us*.” God in our nature. God enshrined in a tabernacle of human flesh. God incarnate, partaking of all the essential principles of humanity. Not God in his essential character, but God in his Mediatorial relationship to sinful man. Not God in the heights of celestial majesty, and in the effulgence of heavenly noontide glory, but God on earth, God with man, living in our world, walking in our streets, our kinsman, and our friend. Not God arrayed in the vestments of pure and strict justice, with his warlike bow, and his glittering sword, but God in all the matchlessness of love,

and mercy, and compassion. God, concerned for the restoration of his erring, ruined creatures, and executing means, whereby they should not be expelled from him, Immanuel, God with us, God on our side, and against our adversaries. God delivering us from our misery and sins. God evincing unparalleled love to us, and inconceivable solicitude for our eternal salvation. How endearing is this title to the true believer! Christ is one with the Father, by virtue of his Godhead, and he is one with us, by virtue of his humanity. A Saviour filling heaven with his glory, and yet stooping to the earth in the depths of his mercy and love. As Immanuel, he is with sinners, as a sufficient and willing Saviour. He is with his people on earth, as their hope and joy. And he is with the blood-wash'd spirits in heaven, as their great and everlasting reward.

June 16.

CHRIST THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH.

The Head of the body, the church.—Col. i. 18.

THE church of the Redeemer, is beautifully likened to the human body. Like the human body, it is composed of various parts, and members. Some of these resemble the hands, others the feet, all of which united, make one compact body. Of this body, Jesus is the head. He is the head *exclu-*

sively. Angels may minister to it, and highly gifted and holy men may have official stations, but there is but one head, that is Christ. The pope therefore may be the head of the church of Rome, but not of the church of Jesus. Kings, and Ecclesiastical powers, may form the headship of Religious Communities, but Jesus only, is the Head of his body, the church. "One is your Master, even Christ," and all ye are brethren. As the Head, Christ is the only source of *vitality*. From him, existence and energy are diffused through the whole system. There may be life, without some of the inferior members, but separation from the head, is immediate death. Thus we have life from, and by Christ. Out of him we are dead, in him we are new born creatures, and alive from the dead. As the Head, Christ is the source of *knowledge and wisdom*. The head thinks, and devises, and plans for the body. The head is the seat of understanding and judgment. Thus Jesus is made unto his people, *wisdom*, as well as sanctification and redemption. In Christ dwells all the fulness of wisdom and knowledge, and from this boundless source, all the need of his people is supplied. As the Head, Christ is the source of all *authority and power*. The head directs and governs the body. All the members are subordinate to the head. As the head is the residence of the mind, and as the material man is influenced by the spiritual, so with Jesus only, is the right to exert power, and to rule over

every believer, being Head over all things to his church.

June 17.

CHRIST THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH.

PART II.—Col. i. 18.

IN reflecting on the headship of the church, we must be struck with its *dignity*. How glorious — how illustrious — how divine is the church's head. We are reminded also of its *all-sufficiency*. There can be no lack with such a head — no perplexity nor imbecility: the head of the church is emphatically *full* of grace and truth. Neither ought we to forget the *efficient sympathy* of this head. Jesus, as the head of the body, feels all that his members suffer. He is touched with a feeling of all their infirmities, and he knows well how to succour and support in temptations and trials,

“For he hath felt the same.”

In all their afflictions he is afflicted, and whatever is done to them he considers it as done to himself: the most insignificant member cannot suffer without the sympathizing consciousness of the head. The duties which devolve upon the members of the body to the head, obviously include *sacred reverence*: to him belongs all honor and glory: we are to revere and honour him even as we revere and

honour the Father: his glory we are to seek in all things, and whatever we do, we are to do it in his name. As the head, he also demands our *subjection* and *obedience*: we are his disciples only if we follow and obey him; if his grace influences our hearts, and if we rejoice to keep his commandments. There must likewise be *conformity* and *resemblance* between the members and their head: as members of Jesus, we are partakers of his divine nature; “beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image from glory unto glory, even by the Spirit of the Lord.” As we once possessed the image of the earthy, by grace we are renewed, and bear the image of the heavenly. How endearing, interesting, precious, and everlastingly momentous, is the union between Christ and his church!

June 18.

CHRIST CLEANSING THE LEPER.

I will, be thou clean.—Luke v. 13.

AMONG the diseases to which our afflicted humanity is liable, there are none more distressing than that of leprosy. It not only covered the body with a cutaneous disease, but it also affected the whole internal system, giving to the breath a most offensive and effluvia thereby rendering agreeable intercourse with society utterly impossible. The disease of

leprosy is fully described to us in the book of Leviticus, and there we see the ordinances which God appointed in reference to it. Now it came to pass as Jesus was in a certain city, a man afflicted with leprosy fell down before him, crying "Lord if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." Jesus then put forth his hand and touched him, saying, "I will, be thou clean." No doubt this leper had heard of Christ, and had therefore concluded that he was the Messiah, and as such he addressed him, and believed in his power to deliver him from his leprosy. He said "Lord," thus acknowledging his divine mission and authority. "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." "I do not doubt thy efficacy even to cleanse me, totally defiled as I am; if thou only wilt exert that power I am firmly persuaded of my recovery." Jesus then "touched" him, not afraid of infection, nor of the ceremonial pollution attached to the touching of a leper, and then said "I will, be thou clean." The man's faith stumbled at Christ's willingness, Jesus therefore said, "I will," thus his love and compassion were equal to his ability, and instantly the man was cleansed. The internal disease was stayed, the polluted breath was made pure, and the leprous skin was changed, and became as the flesh of a little child.

June 19.

CHRIST CLEANSING THE LEPER.

PART II. — *Luke v. 13.*

IN the miracle just considered we have abundant matter for useful and instructive reflection. In the leper we have exhibited a striking exhibition of the moral state of every sinner. Sin is spiritual leprosy, and with this melancholy disease all the human race are affected. Like the leprosy, it is internal defilement, it pollutes the breath and lips, and throws its disgusting scaly foulness over every faculty and power of the soul. It is connected with great pain, — it is rapid in its progress, — it separates man from God, and all that is holy in this life; and unless cleansed, renders him only fit for the dark and terrible sepulchre of the second death. It is dreadfully infectious, for one sinner destroyeth much good. No human antidote has ever been discovered. All who have attempted to provide a specific, such as philosophers, poets, and legislators, have utterly failed. Jesus is the only one who can restore from this spiritual leprosy. He can effect it completely by his omnific touch, by his almighty word. If he says to the sinner, “thy sins are forgiven,” they are all cast as a stone into the depths of the sea. If he say “be healed” or, “be thou made whole,” a man whose sins were as scarlet are as wool, though red like crimson, they are as white as snow. And he is as willing as he

is able. For this end did he come into our world, that he might save sinners, — that he might seek and save that which was lost. Let the poor sin-stricken leper fall down before him, and in the exercise of faith earnestly solicit his saving aid, and he will assuredly say, “I will, be thou clean.”

June 20.

CHRIST RESTORING THE WITHERED HAND.

Stretch forth thy hand.—Mark iii. 5.

JESUS, as he went into the synagogue, met with a man who had a withered hand: his misery attracted the overflowing compassion of the Saviour, and he at once contemplated the restoration of the useless and cumbrous limb: Jesus therefore said unto him, “Stretch forth thine hand.” Now the command at first appears unreasonable; for if the hand were withered, the poor man had lost all power over it, and the volitions of his mind could not affect it. But the man did not reason thus: his ear caught the divine mandate, and his heart at once harmonized with it; he made the effort, and his hand was at once made whole even as the other. Therefore, we are instructed that whenever Christ commandeth, he also imparts the power necessary for obeying the

command; hence, when he said "Stretch forth thine hand," the necessary ability was given; the blood began to circulate through its frozen channels, the muscles began to soften and relax, and the energy of life was experienced in the dead member; and thus the man put it forth, and it was perfectly restored. Now, in like manner, when God commands us to repent, he only requires the consent of our own hearts to this, and our repentance shall be free, and genuine, and acceptable in his sight. When he says to the sinner, Believe the record given of my Son, if the heart cordially and affectionately attempts the reception of the record, the full power to believe it shall be experienced, and the soul shall exclaim, "Lord, I do believe," and shall thus be saved. If the Lord call upon us to pray, to seek his face by fervent supplication — if but our inability be expressed before God — if we can only say, "Lord, teach us how to pray," yet the spirit of prayer and the grace of supplication shall be poured out upon us, and with fervour we shall be enabled to supplicate; and acceptance shall be the happy result. When God speaks to us, he never withholds the ability necessary either for doing or suffering his holy and blessed will.

June 21.

CHRIST RAISING THE WIDOW'S SON.

Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow.—Luke vii. 12.

A funeral procession, is a solemn spectacle at any time. To behold a fellow being borne to his long home, to the place of silent darkness, where the inhabitants shall remain undisturbed till the resurrection of the last day. Some funeral scenes are far more affecting than others. In cases of old age, after severe and protracted sickness, death seems a desirable refuge, and we do not wonder, when we see the evening of years, followed by the setting sun of life. But we are struck, when in the midst of health, and maturity, the fatal arrow should be commissioned, and that the sun should go down, while it is yet only noonday. Now this was the case with the funeral procession which arrested the attention of Jesus. He was a young man, and to render the matter still more affecting, it is said, that he was an *only* son, and the only son of a *widow*. How mysterious, and incomprehensible are the ways of God to man. The aged, infirm, and dependant widow is spared, while the young man, in all his strength, and vigour, is cut down. How it admonishes us not to reckon on continued life, under any circumstances. Who can tell what a day may bring forth? It is said, that

“much people” followed in the mourning train. No doubt they were astonished, and deeply affected by the death of this young man. And it is not improbable, that he had been an amiable youth, and therefore his loss would be lamented by all. Besides, how befitting that they should manifest their kindest sympathy towards the aged, weeping widowed mother. Let us not forget, that it is written, “Rejoice with those that do rejoice, and weep with those that weep.” “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.”

June 22.

CHRIST RAISING THE WIDOW’S SON.

PART II.—*Luke vii. 12.*

WHEN Jesus beheld the melancholy procession, and saw the deeply afflicted mother, he had compassion on her. The scene affected his tender heart. He perceived not only the external evidence of sorrow in her countenance, but he also knew the depth of anguish with which her soul was now afflicted. We do not wonder that Christ’s compassionate soul was moved; for it was compassion that brought him from heaven, and that characterized all he said and effected on earth; and it is compassion which now distinguishes his mediatorial work in glory. Jesus therefore said

to the woman, "Weep not:" then he touched the bier, and arrested it in its course. No doubt universal amazement would now seize the astonished multitude. Then, with his almighty voice, he spake, and said, "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise." The voice reached the regions of death; the young man heard and felt its omnific power; the spirit resumed its habitation; the heart began to heave, and warm, and dilate; the blood circulated, the eyes opened, and he sat up, and spake to those around him: and now the miracle is concluded by Jesus giving him back to his mother. He might have employed him in his service—made an apostle or evangelist of him sent him forth as a preacher from the dead; but his mother had need of him; he was given back to her, that he might be her solace in old age: and as compassion to her arrested the Saviour, and commenced the miracle, so now compassion gave the last finishing-stroke to this splendid and divine scene. In this miracle we have a striking proof of Christ's power and Godhead. What an illustration of his being truly The Resurrection and the Life!—what a solid basis is laid for believing hope, as to the great and final resurrection! Happy are all they who are interested in the saving compassion of the Son of God.

June. 23.

THE WINDS AND WAVES SUBJECT TO CHRIST.

What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the seas obey him.—Matt. viii. 27.

AFTER the numerous and fatiguing labors of the day, Jesus sought temporary refuge, and repose, in a small fishing vessel. Very soon after they pushed from land, a great storm arose, insomuch that they appeared in imminent peril of being lost. The fears of the disciples were exceedingly excited, and after using all necessary means for their security, they apply to Jesus. Jesus was asleep, his wearied frame was refreshing itself, with nature's sweet restorative, balmy repose. He had no guilt, he was conscious of his purity, and also of his lordship and universal power, therefore was a stranger to agitation and dread. They awoke him, and said, "Lord save, we perish." Here we see an exhibition of unbelieving fears. Perish ! why, had they not been witnesses of Christ's omnific power, and did they not believe him to be the Son of God ? Perish ! why, not unless the Saviour perished too, for he was in the vessel with them. Still, it is pleasing to observe, that although they were full of fears, as to perishing, yet they seem to display some faith at least, in Christ's ability, for to him they repair, and his aid they solicit. Jesus, who remained undisturbed, by

the boisterous elements of nature, is at once awakened by the cries of his disciples. And now having arisen, in all the majesty and greatness of his Godhead, he rebukes the turbulent waves, and hushes the tempestuous winds, into a perfect calm. In ordinary cases, it requires several days, before the agitation of the waters, can subside after a storm, but no sooner does Jesus speak, than a calm is effected in an instant, and the furious waters, are smooth and plain, as the surface of the polished mirror.

June 24.

THE WINDS AND WAVES SUBJECT TO CHRIST.

PART II.—*Matt. viii. 27.*

HAVING surveyed the miracle itself, we must be struck with the *power* which is invested in Christ. What power! to bind down the terrific storm — to hush the tempest's roar — to calm the raging seas! Here too, Jesus displayed his *illimitable authority*. Well indeed has the Apostle said, "that by him all things consist, and he upholdeth all things by the word of his power. How *easily* too can Jesus *effect* his purposes. He spake to the winds, and his voice was heard and felt, and instantly obeyed. Yes, he who four thousand years before, had said let there be *light*, and light was, now says, peace be

still, and there was an instant calm. From the storm on the Galilean lake, let us turn our attention, to that which arises in the convicted sinner's breast. When the eyes have been graciously opened to see the evil of sin, and the dreadful peril to which it exposes its unhappy victims; how proper, that application should be made to Christ; how proper, that earnest prayer should be offered, "Lord save, we perish." And so sure as Jesus liveth and arose, and hushed to silence the tempest, so sure will he speak pardon to the guilty conscience, and peace to the troubled breast. We are also reminded by the miracle, of the condition and circumstances of Christ's church. Like the little fishing boat, the church is on the restless sea of life exposed to tempests and storms, and often apparently in a perishing condition. But this is her security, Jesus is on board, therefore we will not fear, "though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof." The Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge.

"The church like a ship, may by tempests be tost,
On perilous seas, but cannot be lost,
Tho' Satan enrages the wind and the tide,
The Scripture engages, the Lord will provide."

June 25.

CHRIST THE PLANT OF RENOWN.

I will raise up for them a plant of renown.—*Ezek. xxxiv. 29.*

CHRIST is often presented to us in a metaphorical manner by the prophets. Hence earth, and seas, and skies, have been the subjects of research, to set forth the glories of the Redeemer's person, and the infinite importance of his work. The figure employed by Ezekiel, is that of a plant, a plant raised up of distinguished renown. Isaiah when referring to Jesus, observes, "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots." And Jeremiah also says, "Behold the days come saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous *branch*, and a king shall reign and prosper." Now the metaphor of a plant seems to convey to us an idea of the *lowly appearance* of Jesus. He is not described as a lofty cedar, but as a lowly tender plant. "He shall grow up as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground." And this was accomplished to the very letter — his parentage, birthplace, his appearance, occupation, and his retinue all accorded with that humiliating prophecy. But, the figure also seems to denote the *hidden* or *unrevealed* character of Christ. The chief part of a plant is concealed, hidden from the eye of observation under ground.

Now in the humble form which Jesus assumed, was concealed all the glories of the Godhead. He appeared as a mere man, the subject of poverty, and of human scorn, was accounted as nothing before men, yet the uncreated and majestic attributes of Deity all belonged to him. In the lowly tabernacle of his flesh, dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. How differently did Jesus appear to God, angels and men. Jehovah viewed him with infinite complacency and love. Angels gladly descended and left their glorious seats to minister to him as their glorious Lord. While to men he appeared to have no inviting form, or attractive comeliness, they saw no beauty in him, that he should be desired.

June 26.

CHRIST THE PLANT OF RENOWN.

PART II. — *Ezek. xxxiv. 29.*

HOWEVER men might undervalue and despise the Saviour, and however he might humble and abase himself before them, yet it had been predicted that he should attain to distinguished celebrity, and that he should be a plant of *renown*. Keeping the metaphor before us, let us see for what this Plant is justly renowned. This Plant is *medicinal*, and is renowned for its *unrivalled virtues*. From this is

extracted the true balm of Gilead,—it contains a specific for every spiritual ill and woe of life—it is fallen nature's grand catholicon—the soul's restorative, and its leaves are for the healing of the nations. There is no malady of the sin-sick heart, however deep-seated, malignant, or fatal in its tendency, that is proof against its healing power. It is renowned also for *unbounded fruitfulness*. Some plants are merely valued on account of their beautiful form and texture, or the fragrant odoriferous scent they yield, but this plant yields fruit of the most precious kind, and in the greatest possible abundance. All the events of Christ's life, all his offices, all he did and taught, yield to the believing mind, food of which the world knows nothing: pardon, peace, adoption, holiness, comforting grace, and eternal life, are the produce of this renowned plant. It is renowned for its *perpetual verdure* and *cooling shade*—it is an evergreen, its leaves never fade, and its virtues never fail, and under the cooling shade of this plant, the contemplative soul sits with great delight. Finally this plant is renowned for its *vast extent* and its *eternal perpetuity*. This is emphatically the bread-fruit tree for a starving world. Its branches are only bounded by the circumference of the globe itself. It is designed for the benefit of all the nations that dwell on the earth; and after myriads of human beings have enjoyed its virtues on earth, it shall yield paradisaical de-

lights to the glorified spirits before the throne of God for ever and ever.

June 27.

CHRIST THE PLANT OF RENOWN.

PART III.—*Ezek.* xxxiv 29.

It will be seen it is also predicted, that this plant should be raised up. Now it was in some respects raised up, or made prominent, in the ancient types and ceremonies of that Levitical economy, as it pleased God in that way to keep up a lively expectation of the promised Messiah. The same also may be said of the promises and prophecies which were renewed from time to time. But this plant was literally raised up at his *incarnation*. It was then that the Lord God of Israel raised up an horn of salvation in the house of his servant David. Then it was that Simeon exclaimed, "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation." This plant was raised up also at his *baptism*. Now he came forth from privacy, and entered upon his great mission and glorious work. Now the Father placed his broad seal upon him, and called upon the world to receive him as his beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased. But, he was especially raised up on the *cross*. It was here that the great sacrificial undertaking was effected—it was here that he was to be lifted up, that he might draw all men unto him. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wil-

derness, even so was the son of man lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The renown of Jesus is inseparably connected with his cross. This is to be the centre of attraction to all people, and the only object of his church's glorying through all generations. The renovation of the world is to be effected by the power of the cross of Christ.

June 28.

CHRIST THE PLANT OF RENOWN.

PART IV.—*Ezek.* xxxiv. 29.

As Jesus was raised up at his incarnation, baptism, and on the cross, so also he was raised up at his resurrection from the dead. He was raised up on the cross that he might be cut down: Earth and hell combined to destroy this renowned plant. And he was cut down—cut down publicly—cut down amidst the execrations of the maddened, blood-thirsty populace—cut down by the express authority of the blinded Jewish hierarchy—cut down amidst the rejoicings of fallen spirits; for this was emphatically the hour of darkness—cut down amidst the weepings and wailings of his disciples and the daughters of Jerusalem—cut down to the astonishment of the angels of heaven—cut down amidst the darkening of the sun, the rending of the temple's veil, the

cleaving asunder of rocks, and the opening of the sepulchres of the dead — cut down a spectacle to devils, and angels, and men. But he was not cut down for ever; for on the third day he was raised from the dead, according to the Scriptures, and thus obtained his resurrection's power and glory. This plant was also raised up at Christ's *ascension into heaven*: from heaven he came, and when he had finished his work on earth, he resumed his station, and has sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. He is also constantly raised up by the *preaching of the Gospel*: to preach the Gospel is to exhibit this plant, extol its healing virtues, and persuade men to partake of its saving efficacy — to cry aloud: —

“ O that the world would taste and see
 The riches of his grace :
 The arms of love that compass me
 Would all mankind embrace ! ”

Finally this plant will be raised up in the *praises of the redeemed* for ever. His name shall be great through all the ages of eternity, and he shall be blessed for ever and ever. The subject of the eternal contemplations and of the eternal song of the innumerable company of the skies will be the plant of renown.

“ The whole celestial glorious throng
 Before his feet will fall,
 And join in one harmonious song,
 And crown him Lord of all ! ”

June 29.

CHRIST THE DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS.

The desire of all nations shall come.—Hagg. ii. 7.

THIS prophecy evidently relates to the Redeemer: to no other person was it ever applicable. In Jesus there are ample reasons why all nations should thus desire him. The announcement of the woman's seed to bruise the serpent's head excited in our first parents an ardent desire for his appearance; and hence when Cain was born, Eve seems to have imagined that the prophecy was now realized, hence she exclaimed, "I have gotten a man—the Lord." To Abraham, afterwards, the promise was renewed, and he looked forward by faith and saw Christ's day, and was glad. Prophets and kings were alike expectants of the appearance of the illustrious Messiah, and he was the burden of prophecy and the substance of promises for thousands of years. At the time of Christ's birth the expectation became more intense and general: there was now universal peace throughout the mighty Roman empire, and the Jewish dispensation seemed lading with years, waiting only to be superseded by another œconomy. Philosophers of all nations and countries had been trying numberless expedients to stem the torrents of crime and wretchedness

which seemed to overspread the world; but every scheme failed, and every plan proved abortive: hence the depth of their misery and the helplessness of their condition seemed to cause nature itself to groan after some deliverer from this bondage of corruption. At length Jesus did appear; and his doctrines, and his precepts, and the ordinances and the blessings which he communicated, were all of such a character as to render him worthy of universal acceptation, and to show all men that his religion was eminently adapted to be the religion of the whole world.

June 30.

CHRIST THE DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS.

PART II. — *Hagg.* ii. 7.

CHRIST ought truly to be the desire of all nations, because he has to communicate what all nations require. He has *knowledge* to *diffuse*; and all nations require this: he alone can give that true light to man, by which his spirit can be emancipated from the thralldom of ignorance and error: he makes them acquainted with themselves — their misery, their peril, and their only remedy, too: he enlightens man, as to his present state, as to his real capabilities, and as to the eternity

which is before him. He brought life and immortality to light. Christ has *pardons* to *dispense*; and all nations require these: all nations are guilty—none righteous, no, not one; all men are guilty before God—this guilt involves tremendous consequences—it exposes to eternal death; and Jesus came to pardon the guilty, and he died, and arose from the dead, that remission of sins might be preached to all nations. He has *holiness* to *impart*; and all men need this: human nature is not only guilty, but defiled also—universally corrupted and unclean: now Jesus came to save men from their sins, and to cleanse from all unrighteousness, and thus restore mankind to the favour and image of God. Then he has *solid happiness* to *give*; and all men desire this: man in every region of the earth desires to be happy; and Jesus came to bestow universal peace and joy to a miserable world. And his kingdom, when implanted in the heart, is “righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.” Finally, all men have an impression of an *immortality*: he came to bring it to light, and to offer *eternal life*. Yes, he hath clearly revealed to us another and a better world. He hath made known the certainty of the spirit’s existence after death, and hath assured us of the resurrection of the body at the last day. And he came to redeem both body and soul, and to confer upon them unending blessedness and eternal life. Ought

not Jesus, then, to be the desire of all nations? As his first advent was universally expected, there is a period predicted when all nations shall be blessed in him and shall call him blessed. Yes, his name shall be great, from the rising unto the setting of the sun, and the whole earth shall be filled with his glory. The Lord hasten it, in his time. Amen.

“For him shall endless prayer be made,
And princes throng to crown his head,
His name, like sweet perfume shall rise
With every morning sacrifice.

People and realms of every tongue,
Dwell on his love with sweetest song,
And infant voices shall proclaim
Their early blessings on his name.

Blessings abound where'er he reigns,
The pris'ner leaps to lose his chains,
The weary find eternal rest,
And all the sons of want are blest.

Let every creature rise and bring,
Peculiar honours to our King,
Angels descend with songs again,
And earth repeat the loud Amen.”

July 1.

JESUS THE KEEPER OF HIS PEOPLE.

The Lord is thy keeper.—Psalm cxxi. 5.

THE condition of believers on earth is one of weakness, and danger: they are poor pilgrims passing through this desert world,—

“To fairer worlds on high.”

In themselves they have no strength to perform the duties devolving upon them, much less have they any might to contend against their powerful and numerous adversaries. How delightful is it then to reflect that they are not left to their own resources. How cheering to be able to say “The Lord is on my side, the Lord is my keeper.” All that the believer has, is kept by the Lord. Their *persons* are always precious in his sight; the very hairs of their head are all numbered. He does not suffer their feet to be moved. He preserves their going out, and their coming in. The sun smites them not by day, nor the moon by night. He keeps them from all evil, and he blesses them for evermore. Then their *souls* are the objects of his especial solicitude and care. These he hath redeemed with

the inexpressible price of his precious blood. And he cannot but prize, what he hath so dearly bought. Yes, he is their invincible shield, from the attacks of the devil. He blesses their souls with the constant supplies of his grace, and matures them for everlasting life. Then their *faith and hope* are also in his keeping. In his mercy they trust, and in him do all his people hope. They commit by faith and hope, all their immortal concerns into his hands, until that day. Their faith he strengthens and increases, by the supplies of his grace. And having begun the good work, he performs it until the day of Christ. Their hope he invigorates and brightens, irradiates their celestial path, and makes it brighter and brighter, unto the perfect day. Shall we not then, commit the keeping of both body and soul, into his hands, in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

“ Jesus protects ; my fears begone !
What ! can the Rock of Ages move ?
Safe in thy arms I lay me down,
Thy everlasting arms of love,”

July 2.

CHRIST OUR WISDOM.

Who of God is made unto us wisdom.—1 Cor. i. 30.

THE Apostle in the twenty fourth verse, represents Jesus, both as the wisdom and power of God.

Wisdom is one of those titles, which especially belongs to him. All the treasures of knowledge and wisdom are with him, for he is God allwise. Now, all that indicates design and skill in nature, providence, and grace, is the effect of his wisdom. But it is to the influence of his grace on the minds of his people, that we are now directed. He is made unto them wisdom. The human heart is ignorant, destitute of all saving knowledge. Man knows not himself, nor the blessed God, nor Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. It is Christ who opens his darkened eyes, and illumines his benighted understanding. He makes the soul to feel its fallaciousness and error. He exhibits the foolishness of its pursuits, and also its own inadequacy to obtain satisfactory and permanent good. And he makes him wise unto salvation. As our wisdom, Christ leads the soul to seek the chief good, to pursue the most important and glorious realities, and to lay a good foundation against the time to come. Never can we be said to be wise, till we are Christ's, and Christ is ours. Then also for all the purposes of spiritual life, Christ is our wisdom. He leads us into all the knowledge of his will. He teaches our feet to walk safely, and our hands to labour with success. He makes us more intimately acquainted with ourselves, with our duties, with our privileges, and with our blessings. He makes us wise in all his will, and word, and thus raises the mind from one degree of wisdom and knowledge

to another, until we are made meet for the realms of eternal day. By close and unbroken fellowship with Christ, let us seek after higher attainments of spiritual wisdom and understanding. Let us take a whole Saviour to our souls, for every purpose of salvation. In him is wisdom for our every exigency, and his Holy Spirit is pledged to lead us into all truth.

July 3.

CHRIST OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

And Righteousness.—1 Cor. i. 30.

JEREMIAH when prophesying of Christ, says, "And this is the name by which he shall be called, the Lord our Righteousness." (Jer. xxiii. 6.) Christ is righteousness in every sense of the word. His will is the only rule of righteousness—his nature was the essence of righteousness—his life was righteousness embodied. Righteousness living, speaking, and acting, in all places, and under all circumstances. He is the prince of righteousness—he came to bring in an everlasting righteousness—his throne is a throne of righteousness—and his rule and dominion is a reign of truth and righteousness. But he is the righteousness of his people. In him alone have they *justifying righteousness*. They have no righteousness to present before God, therefore cannot be just in his sight. But by faith

in Jesus, the just one, who is the mediator between God and man, God can, and does justify them freely from all things, and considers them, and treats with them as righteous before him. Yes, the Lord is well pleased with all who believe in him, for his righteousness sake, who magnified the law, and made it honorable. Then there is *internal righteousness*, righteousness of heart and life, and Christ is also the source and author of this. His precious blood cleanseth us from all sin. He sprinkles the clean water of spiritual influence on the foul polluted hearts of those who believe in him, and he writes his law upon the hallowed tablets of their souls, and then they run in the way of his ordinances and statutes, with delight. He is also the Righteousness of all the *services* of his people. God cannot accept of any sinful, or even imperfect service. Frail man cannot present a perfect offering to God. How then are our services accepted? Through the righteousness of Christ. He stands as Mediator between God and us. God can treat with his righteous Son, and through him with us. And Jesus, by his all meritorious righteousness, renders our otherwise totally unworthy services, acceptable to the Father. Thus our obedience is accepted; thus our praises and prayers are all accepted; and thus, through Christ's righteousness, do we constantly stand accepted of God. Let us beware of self righteousness; let us remember, a righteousness is indispensable, and thus may we

be constrained to trust alone to Christ, who is our righteousness, strength, and salvation.

“ Jesus, thy blood and righteousness,
My beauty are, my glorious dress ;
'Midst flaming worlds, in these array'd,
With joy shall I lift up my head.”

July 4.

CHRIST OUR SANCTIFICATION.

And Sanctification.—1 Cor. i. 30.

SANCTIFICATION commences when the soul is regenerated, when we are born again by the incorruptible seed of the word of God. Now this quickening of the soul is the work of Jesus. He is the resurrection and life of his people. For says the Apostle to the believers at Ephesus, “You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins.” It is when his voice is believingly heard, that the principles of the new and spiritual life are imparted. Sanctification includes conformity of the soul to God. It is the setting apart of its faculties and powers to the service and glory of God. Christ’s holy life is the model of our sanctification. As we live to him, and in resemblance of his holy example, are we sanctified before God. When we grow up into the image of his spiritual likeness, then is the work of sanctification advancing within us. The

grace by which this is effected is communicated from Christ. His grace alone is sufficient for us. We bear fruit, by being in him as the living vine, and deriving nourishment and strength from him. By believingly beholding his glory, we are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the spirit of the Lord. Entire sanctification is the soul's perfect resemblance to Christ's moral likeness, to which we are ardently to aspire, and which constitutes the *meetness* for the inheritance of the saints in light. As this work is commenced by Jesus, and as he carries it on through all its progressive stages, so he will bring on the head stone, amidst acclamations of grace, grace unto it. Let us keep his name constantly before us; a life of sanctification can only be carried on by looking unto Jesus, who is the Author and Finisher of our faith. Let us avail ourselves of all the sanctifying ordinances of his house. Read and meditate on the sanctifying truths of his word. And fervently, with all prayer, constantly seek the sanctifying influences of his Holy Spirit.

July. 5.

CHRIST OUR REDEMPTION.

And redemption.—1 Cor. i. 30.

THIS redemption includes our souls being freed from the curse of the law, our bodies from the do-

minion of death, and the complete deliverance both of body and soul from the wrath to come. In each case Jesus is the redemption of his people. Hence concerning the soul's deliverance from the curse of the law, it is said, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." (Gal. iii. 13.) Hence also we are said to be justified, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. (Rom. iii. 24.) Then as it respects the redemption of the body from death, Christ is emphatically styled the "Resurrection and the life." He has engaged also, that all who believe in him, shall have everlasting life, and he will raise them up at the last day. (John vi. 40.) The Apostle therefore states, that believers, having the first fruits of the Spirit groan within themselves, waiting for the adoption, that is to say, the redemption of their bodies. Christ by his own resurrection, has become the pledge, and the glorious first fruits, of the resurrection to eternal life, of all who believe in him. Then Jesus is our redemption also, both of body and soul from the wrath to come. Hence it is said, "He hath redeemed us to God," that is, both to his favour and image, and also to his presence and eternal glory. It is also stated that "He hath obtained redemption for us, and that the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Christ is our redemption, by cheerfully becoming our substitute and receiving in himself all the due demerit of our sin. Hence it is said that he gave his life,

that he gave himself, and also that he redeemed us by the shedding of his blood. In each case the sense is obviously the same, and clearly teaches the important truth of Christ's substitution in our room and stead, that by his incarnation we might be partakers of the Divine nature, — that by his poverty we might be made rich, — that by his bondage, mockery, and sorrows, we might have freedom, dignity and joy, — and that by his death upon the cross, we might have everlasting life.

“ Then, then our full redemption be,
Exerting all thy power to save,
And swallow up mortality,
And raise our dust out of the grave ;
Author, and sum of heavenly bliss,
Thee let our souls and bodies prove,
Implung'd in that unknown abyss,
That ocean of redeeming love.”

July 6.

CHRIST THE REFINER.

And he shall sit as a Refiner.—Malachi iii. 3.

CHRIST is obviously intended in this prophecy, and it quite accords with the Apostle's description of the end of Christ's coming, “ Who gave himself that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” (Tit. ii. 14.) Christ's refining, is the

purifying of his people, the removal of all dross, and alloy, and imparting unto them those holy qualities, which will render them fit for the most honorable purposes on earth, and finally meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. The Gold of Christ's church is not pure, until he hath sat, and brought it through the refining process. How then does he do this, in what way does he act as the refiner of his people? His *truth* is refining. The words of his mouth are pure words, and they enlighten the eyes, and exert a cleansing power over the heart and life. Hence he prayed to his Father, and said, "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth." His *Spirit* is refining. Hence that blessed agent is called the Holy Spirit, not only because he is essentially holy, but also because all holiness is the result of his influences. The Spirit refines, by leading the mind into all truth, and by applying the blood of Jesus to the conscience, which cleanseth from all sin. Hence in reference both to the truth and the Spirit conjointly, the Apostle says, "Ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit. (1 Pet. i. 22.) Christ refines by *afflictions*. He brings his people into the furnace, and by causing them to pass through the fires, he makes them to lose the dross and tin of sin. He himself, is said to have been made perfect through sufferings, and though no chastening for the present is joyous, but grievous, yet afterwards, it yieldeth the peaceable

fruits of righteousness to them, who are exercised thereby.

July 7.

CHRIST THE REFINER.

PART II.—*Malachi* iii. 3.

WE have said, that Christ refines his people by his truth, by his Spirit, and by afflictions. It is by afflictions, that many of the graces are matured, and that the soul is conformed to the suffering Redeemer. Hence it is written, “tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed.” And again, “if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.” As the refiner, Christ possesses every requisite qualification, necessary for the work. His *skill* is infinite: he knows the nature of his materials. What they should lose, in what they are deficient, and what is requisite for their complete salvation. Then his experience is extensive. He has suffered, and knows the nature of every variety of affliction to which we are exposed. Poverty, reproach, tribulation, anguish, and death itself, were all endured by himself. Then his *tenderness* is unbounded. He not only knows the true nature of our sorrows, but he is “touched with the feeling of our infirmities.” The attack of Saul upon the primi-

tive christians, was felt by Jesus, when he said "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me :—" His tenderness being such, he will not allow our sufferings to be injurious, nor our temptations to be stronger than we are able to bear, nor will he ever leave us to the scorching influences of the fires, but when we are tried, bring us forth as gold. It is said, "he shall *sit* as a refiner," that is, he shall watch the whole process; he shall heat, or cool the furnace as circumstances require, and when he beholdeth the design accomplished, and his own image clearly reflected, he will then bestow the crown of glory that fadeth not away.

July 8.

CHRIST IN THE HOUSE OF SIMON.

And he went into the Pharisee's house and sat down to meat.—Luke vii. 36.

JESUS was the instructor of all classes of the people. We find him ministering the word of life, both to the high and the low, both to the rich and the poor, to publicans and sinners, and also to the Pharisees. On this occasion a man of the name of Simon invited Jesus to become his guest. Simon was a Pharisee, and pharisees in general were Christ's greatest enemies, to this there were however some interesting exceptions, amongst them

was Nicodemus, and also the person before us. It happened while Jesus was in the house, that a woman who had formerly been a notorious sinner, having heard that Christ was there, came unto him and stood behind Jesus weeping, washing his feet with her tears, and kissing them, and anointing them with precious ointment. Simon greatly marvelled, and spake *within* himself thus, "This man if he were a Prophet, would have known who and what woman this is." Jesus reading his heart and knowing all the workings of his mind, then addressed to him the interesting parable of the two debtors, and then on the ground of this woman's supreme affection, justified her conduct to him, and said unto her "thy sins are forgiven, thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace." Having glanced at the narrative, we cannot fail to be struck with the condescension and with the grace of the Saviour. He came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance; he came to seek and to save that which was lost; and the most vile and wretched were invited freely to participate of his favor and salvation. We see in this woman an exhibition of sincere and genuine repentance. How great must have been the change, to have so completely softened the heart of one so callous and hardened by a life of deep-toned criminality; what humility, what affection to Jesus she manifested, what holy boldness to display her affection in the presence of a haughty Pharisee. How cheering and consolatory must Christ's address

have been to her. And all who come to him in this manner he will bless with the token of his mercy and grace. Let us beware of the spirit of the Pharisees, and rather rejoice when poor prodigal souls return to God, seeing that the lost are found, and they who were dead are alive again.

July 9.

CHRIST RESTORING THE IMPOTENT MAN.

Jesus saith unto him, rise, take up thy bed and walk.—

John v. 8.

AT the pool of Bethesda, there was an erection of five porches for the reception of afflicted persons, who at a certain season repaired thither, that after the troubling of the water by the Angel of the Lord, they might step in and be made whole. At this pool there lay a man who had been afflicted for thirty-eight years, and who it seems had attended at the troubling of the waters every year; but it was only those who first stepped into the stream who received its marvellous restorative influences, and some one else had always stepped in before him; so that now in addition to a deep rooted infirmity and growing old, he must also have nearly lost all hope of ever receiving the benefit of the healing waters. Happy for him that Jesus passing by saw him in his truly pitiable circumstances, and addressing him said, “Wilt thou be made whole?” and

afterwards he said unto him, "Rise take up thy bed and walk." Now observe, the miracle was effected by *Christ's Almighty Word*, he did not assist him into the stream, he did not use any medical means, he did not even lay his hands on him. He speaks to him, and at the sound of his voice the disease was rebuked, and left him. The miracle was *instantaneous*. A disease of more than thirty years of painful experience, was banished in a moment, and instantly a healthy influence was diffused throughout his whole frame. The miracle was *self-evident*. There could be no deception in the matter. The man must have been well known; his impotency was of necessity obvious to all. Well, Christ commands him to rise, and he makes the effort, and easily accomplishes what he had not been able to do for years. Christ commands him to walk, and now he is able to move without difficulty. He is ordered to take his bed and bear it away, and he obeys the astounding mandate, and he who had been weak and helpless throughout, has now perfect ability both in his arms and feet, and is made every whit whole. O the wonders of the Redeemer's power and grace! Truly he was the Christ, the Son of God

July 10.

CHRIST'S IMPORTANT QUESTION APPLIED.

Wilt thou be made whole?—John v. 6.

THE question proposed to the man at Bethesda, Jesus proposes to every sinner by his Gospel. But to understand and appreciate it, it is necessary that we be reminded of our naturally diseased condition. Those that are whole need not a physician, but they who are sick. Then we ask, are you sensible of your spiritually afflicted state by sin? That the whole mind is affected by the painful and dangerous malady of iniquity,—that your disease is *hereditary*, derived from the first human pair,—that it is *deep-seated*, and has grown up with you, and has been increasing in virulence every year, —that it is *wofully dangerous*, exposing its wretched victims to the dreadful miseries of the second death, —that it is *incurable* by *human expedients*. No man can thoroughly understand it, much less heal it. It is of the greatest importance that you should know and deeply deplore the plague of your own hearts. Then we ask, will you be made whole? A physician there is, a healing balm is provided: nothing but your hearty acquiescence is necessary to effect a perfect cure. This physician is Christ, the balm is his precious blood, in which we have forgiveness, escape, sanctification and eternal life. Will you

believe in its efficacious influences, and cordially apply it to your sin-sick soul. "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou shalt be saved," — if you come trusting in his blood, you shall feel guilt removed, conscience pacified, and you shall have holy access to God in this life, and finally stand in his glorious presence in the life which is to come. Will you then be made whole? — made whole in Christ's way, on Christ's gracious and simple terms, made whole now; "For behold now is the accepted time, and behold now is the day of salvation."

July 11.

CHRIST FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND.

Jesus said unto them, they need not depart, give ye them to eat.—Matt. xiv. 15.

JESUS had been actively engaged in teaching and blessing the people, until the shadows of evening were encompassing the multitudes with whom he had been surrounded. Besides, having been with him for several hours, the people were ready to faint for want of food. Jesus, who possessed a body possessing all our sinless infirmities and weaknesses, knew the state of the people, and had compassion upon them. The disciples had already intreated Jesus that the people might depart—that

they might go into the neighbouring villages and obtain food, seeing that they were in a desert place. But Jesus ~~said~~, "They need not depart; give ye them to eat." Now the number of the multitude was about five thousand, besides women and children. It was obvious that it would require a large stock of provision to satisfy the demand of a single meal, for so great a number: so the disciples reminded Jesus that all the food they possessed consisted only of five loaves, and two small fishes. How totally inadequate were these to meet the wants of the great multitude: there would not have been a single grain for each person, seeing that these very loaves were most probably nothing more than small cakes, or biscuits, of a few ounces each. But with Christ all things are possible. So Jesus said to the disciples, "bring them hither to me." In the hands of the disciples these loaves and fishes were of no avail in the case of the exigency now before them: but in Christ's hands they were all-sufficient—they were as the seed-corn of that abundant supply which he was about, in his munificent goodness and almighty power, to provide. "Who hath despised the day of small things?" Jesus did not: and we are called to see these five cakes and two fishes so multiplied by his blessing, as to satisfy the immense multitude which now surrounded him.

July 12.

CHRIST FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND.

PART II. — *Matt.* xiv. 15 — 21.

JESUS, having received into his sacred hands the five loaves and fishes, commanded the multitude to sit down. Most likely he did this, first, that the whole might have an opportunity of receiving a supply—that the number who did thus eat might be clearly ascertained; and, finally, that the miracle might be clearly wrought in the sight of them all. Besides, in this way confusion would be avoided, and order, the unvarying law of God, would be beautifully exhibited. It must indeed have been a striking scene, to behold a hundred rows, or lines, consisting of fifty persons in each, all waiting, in breathless silence, to receive from the hands of Jesus a supply of food for their almost fainting bodies. Now, the prefatory process being finished, the Saviour, with the provisions in his hands, lifted up his eyes to heaven, gave thanks, blessed, and brake it. What an exhibition of grateful devotion did Jesus thus manifest! How constantly did he honour his heavenly Father, and what an example hath he thus left us in the reception of the smallest benefit, to sanctify it by prayer and thanksgiving to God! With many, thanksgiving is only offered at the principal meal, as if the minor bounties of

heaven were totally undeserving of our grateful acknowledgments. Let the example of Jesus ever impress upon our minds the necessity of constantly seeking the divine glory, and “in every thing to give thanks.” Jesus now delivered the broken food to the disciples, that they might bear it to the people. And was it not soon exhausted? — did it last until they had passed the first row of fifty persons? So far from this, they went forth, and, by Christ’s almighty, creative, and multiplying power, it increased as they distributed it, and they went from rank to rank, until the whole five thousand, besides women and children, were filled.

July 13.

CHRIST FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND.

PART III.—*Matt.* xiv. 15—21.

HAVING noticed the plain facts connected with this astounding narrative, let us now consider the leading traits of the miracle itself. First we observe that it was a *divine* miracle. No power less than that of Jehovah could possibly have effected it. If it requires the blessing of God to make the seed take root in the earth, to grow, and thus supply the wants of the sower, was it not as obviously necessary, that the same omnipotence should be exerted, in multiplying a few cakes and two fishes, so as to

form an abundant supply for several thousands of hungry persons. O yes, every one must have been convinced, that in this was displayed the finger of God. This was also a *benevolent* miracle. Indeed all Christ's miracles except one were of this description. He came not to curse, but to bless; not to destroy, but to save. He did once curse, but it was merely a tree, a barren tree, one utterly worthless, one which was without a proprietor, and therefore none could be injured by it. No, he exerted not his power to scatter desolation, terror, and death, but blessings, happiness, and life. The people before him began to feel a necessity for food, and he who had made them, and whose large and munificent hand supplies the wants of every creature was bountifully opened unto them. Then the miracle was *obvious* and *incontrovertible*. There could not be any deception practised upon them: they saw the five loaves and two fishes, they witnessed while he blessed, and brake, and supplied the disciples with them, and they all ate, and they were all filled, and perfectly satisfied, so that they had all that demonstration could present, of the reality of the miracle wrought. Those who may dispute its authenticity, had better try to deceive five thousand hungry persons by some pretended miracle, and if they succeed, then this also may be doubted. But of all the miracles Christ wrought none were more self-evident and palpable than this, — they saw, they ate, and were filled.

July 14.

CHRIST'S LESSON OF FRUGALITY.

Gather up the Fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.—John v. 12.

How surprising must it have been to the multitude, that after five thousand had been fed, from five loaves and two fishes, that any thing should remain, when they all had eaten and were filled. Yet so it was, that after they had all been amply supplied, that twelve baskets of fragments were gathered, a quantity many fold more, than what they had at first to supply the people. Herein we perceive, that the blessing of God can make a small amount meet any extent of exigencies in his creatures. But Christ also hath taught us in the gathering of these fragments, the necessity of strict frugality. Why be so frugal, you ask, when the provision was so wonderfully provided, and so superabundant? Because God is the Author of plenty, but not the patron of extravagance and waste. He wishes his mercies to be used and enjoyed, and not squandered and lost. Whatever divine wisdom and power have been exerted to produce, ought to be rightly appropriated, and is surely worthy of our thankful reception. What is extravagantly wasted, would go far to meet all the wants of the distressed poor. Thus our means of liberality would be extended, and we should be enabled

to enjoy more of the sweetest of all luxuries, that of resembling the God of benevolence, and enjoying the ecstatic and divine pleasure of doing good. We should be frugal, because we are only stewards, and not the proprietors of what we possess. And what a fearful account will those have to render to God, who have wasted the blessings imparted to their care, while they have been surrounded by so many fit objects of compassion and mercy. Above all remember, that Christ who could have filled the desert with the bread of heaven, as he did to the thousands of Israel, would not allow a fragment of it to be wasted, but employed his rightful authority and said, "Gather up the fragments, that none of them be lost." He is both our example and Lord, let us therefore feel how necessary it is to christian consistency, that we follow his steps.

July 15.

CHRIST'S LESSON OF FRUGALITY.

PART II.—*John v. 12.*

CHRIST's injunction of frugality, ought to be remembered by those who have the management of our domestic affairs, let not even the crumbs of our tables be wasted. The remains of our meals, if cleanly and carefully preserved, will be very acceptable to those who are truly in want. But may we

not apply this injunction to dress? Ought we not to avoid unnecessary and costly apparel? Christians have none of those foolish and vain objects before them, which are so eagerly pursued by the world. The Apostle remindeth us, that women professing godliness, should adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with broidered hair, or pearls, or *costly* array. Those who have put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and are adorned with the robe of salvation, may well dispense with the world's gaudy tinsel apparel, that is worn by those who have nothing better to put on. Ought we not also to be frugal of our *time*. We are exhorted to be found redeeming the time. Time is so inexpressibly valuable, that its precious moments should be laid out in those pursuits, which by their connection with the soul and eternity, have a pressing demand upon our solemn attention. Yes, a period will come, when the value of the very fragments of time, will be to each of us beyond all comprehension. To seek first the kingdom of God for ourselves, and then the diffusion of saving knowledge to those around us, is obviously the great and chief end of human life. The Saviour's injunction may apply in the general, to our *means* and *money*. By avoiding the misapplication of them to frivolous and vain purposes, and by constantly seeking to glorify God, with body, soul, and property, which are all of them rightfully his. Frugality must be cultivated always in connection

with the fervent desire, that we may be more extensively benevolent, and useful to our fellow men. One said, — get all you can — save all you can — and give all you can.

July 16.

CHRIST'S MIRACLE OF THE LOAVES AND FISHES APPLIED.

And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, besides women and children.—Matt. xiv. 21.

HAVING previously noticed the leading particulars in this miracle, let us now attempt its profitable application. In the multitude collected in the desert, we have a striking representation of the moral condition of the human family. The whole of Adam's posterity are in a desert world, starving for the bread of life, and there is no human expedient, by which their immortal wants can be supplied. In the provision miraculously provided by Jesus, we have a beautiful exhibition of the abundance prepared for this world, in the blessed gospel. Yes, in the gospel, an abundance of the spiritual bread of life is provided. And like that bread, multiplied and bestowed upon the thousands in the desert, it is freely and gratuitously delivered through the medium of the ministers of Christ, to a dying world. In the fragments remaining, we see the all-sufficient amount of spiritual blessings, trea-

sured up in the Saviour. Giving, cannot empowerish an infinite store; withholding, cannot enrich him, whose resources are boundless and eternal. Myriads have eaten and been filled, and myriads more may come and welcome, seeing that there

“Is enough for all, enough for each,
And enough for evermore.”

But there must be personal participation. We must receive the bread of life, and feed upon it by faith. To hear the gospel, and thus to be near to the Saviour, is not enough, we must possess it for ourselves. We must live by faith on the Son of God, and feel that he hath loved us, and given himself for us.

“This precious food my heart revives,
What strength, what nourishment it gives;
O let me evermore be fed,
With this divine celestial bread.”

Having felt the preciousness of the Saviour's grace ourselves, let us invite our famishing neighbours to come to Jesus, that they also may have life, and have it more abundantly.

July. 17.

CHRIST THE CAPTAIN OF SALVATION.

Captain of their salvation,—Heb. ii. 10.

WHEN Joshua stood before Jericho, and lifted up

his eyes, he beheld a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: Joshua asked, art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said nay, but as captain of the host of the Lord am I come; and Joshua fell on his face and worshipped him. And who was this illustrious personage? surely none other than Jesus, the captain of our salvation. There is now a great and momentous war raging, — it is between heaven and hell, between God with his host elect, and Satan with the powers of darkness. It is whether iniquity, or holiness is to prevail; whether the rule of God, or the dominion of Satan is to triumph. It is whether the usurper shall possess our earth, and make it the theatre of his rebellion and crimes, or whether God shall possess it, and reign over it in righteousness and truth. Where Satan reigns, he spreads ruin and death abroad, — he rules but to destroy, — his subjects are the victims of appalling wretchedness, and heirs of endless and irremediable woe. To crush this adversary of God and man, and rescue from his grasp the souls of men, was one great design of the advent of Jesus. For the Son of God was manifested, to destroy the works of the devil. All human beings are concerned in this tremendous conflict. There are only two mighty parties; Satan is the head and ruler of the one, Jesus is the leader and captain of the other. From the entrance of sin into our world to the present moment, the warfare has been

carried on; and it is likely to continue, until the devil shall finally be bound and cast into the bottomless pit. All the holy angels in heaven, and all the righteous saints on earth, are engaged with Christ, and are warring against Satan and the powers of hell. Christ is the head, the captain of salvation. Let us ascertain if we are enlisted in his cause, enrolled under his banner, and are engaged in fighting the good fight of faith.

July 18.

CHRIST THE CAPTAIN OF SALVATION.

PART II. — *Heb. ii. 10.*

CHRIST as the captain of salvation is possessed of every possible attribute for effecting his glorious achievements. His *knowledge* and *skill* are *unbounded*. He knows all connected with the adversaries of his people; their malignity, number, power, and all their movements are ever before him,—he knows how to frustrate their schemes, how to subvert their machinations, and how to render totally harmless all their attacks. His knowledge is so unerring, and so universal, that he cannot be mistaken, surprised, or discomfited. His *courage* is *unexampled*. The stoutest hearts have sometimes trembled,—the bravest have sometimes feared. Jesus never knew what the fear of man,

or devils was. Knowing all things from the beginning, — knowing the united power of his foes, “He sitteth in the heavens and laughs at his enemies, he holdeth them in derision.” His *power* is *illimitable*. No created intelligence can rightly understand the thunder of his power, — he can do every thing, which it is not inconsistent for him to do. All things are upheld by the astounding arm of his power,—he is the omnipotent and invincible Jehovah of hosts. His *resources* are *infinite*. Those engaged on his side can never want any good thing. He opens his wide and liberal hands, and supplies the wants of every living thing. The soldiers of the cross he furnishes with food and raiment, and he teaches them how to fight, his strength is made perfect in their weakness, and he makes them more than conquerors over all their enemies. As the captain of salvation he is ever present with his troops to lead them onwards, and to protect, and bless them. And as the captain of salvation, he will conduct the immortal hosts of conquering redeemed spirits to realms of eternal glory. And to all who overcome under his banners, he will give to sit down with him on his throne, as he overcame and sat down on his Father’s throne.

“Courage.” your Captain cries,
Who all your toil foreknew,
Toil ye shall, yet all despise —
I have o’ercome for you.”

July 19.

CHRIST THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

The Sun of Righteousness. Mal. iv. 2.

THE sun is one of the most striking images by which the glory of the Saviour can possibly be represented. Indeed, it is one of the most sublime of all the creatures of God. It seems to possess the highest place in the material world, being the centre and ruling monarch of the whole. Now, Jesus, of whom the sun is so beautifully an emblem, has a pre-eminence over all creatures and over all worlds. Other intelligences may be high and lofty, but he is the *most* high. His nature is infinitely above theirs: his name is above every name: and his throne is in the highest heaven, even the heaven of heavens. He is the centre of the universe — the exalted monarch, whose sceptre is swayed over all worlds. The sun also is the great source of light: Christ is truly the light of the world: whatever is termed the instinct of animals by which they are regulated, and answer the end for which they were created, is communicated from him: the light of reason and intelligence which distinguishes and elevates man in the scale of being, is imparted by him: the truths of revelation are the emanations of his glorious mind: the spiritual light which chases away the darkness of moral night from the mind, and introduces the day of

grace into the soul, is communicated from him alone. The light of heaven, the resplendent glory of the celestial temple, is entirely derived from him. "The city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." (Rev. i. 23.) How glorious is Jesus, when thus considered. Without him, universal chaos and darkness would reign. Earth and heaven, men and angels, alike depend upon his bright and irradiating beams.

"In darkest shades if he appear,
My dawning is begun :
He is my soul's bright morning star,
And he my rising sun !"

July 20.

CHRIST THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

PART II. — *Mal. iv. 2.*

CHRIST, as the Sun of Righteousness, is not only the source of light, but also of *heat*. Of the natural sun it is said, "There is nothing hid from the heat thereof." The heart of man is cold and frozen : all his affections are benumbed by spiritual paralysis. Christ alone can impress, and soften, and melt the spirit. When he speaks, then our hearts burn within us : when he sheds his love

abroad in our souls, then its constraining influences fill us with an ardent flame of affection towards him, and, in holy ecstasy, we exclaim, "We love him, because he first loved us." Christ, as the sun, is also the source of *life* and *fruitfulness*. The absence of his genial influence produces winter, when the vegetable world falls into a state of sterility and death. The return of his warming rays produces spring, and all nature revives, and the sterile scene buds and blossoms as the rose. Where Christ shines not, it is winter, all is sterility and death. There is no fruit yielded to God. The heart presents one gloomy and fruitless scene, unless it be the briers and thorns of iniquity, which are natural to the soul, and which renders it only fit for destruction. But when Jesus sheds his rays abroad, the soul is resuscitated, the ground of the heart is softened, the fertilising influence is communicated, and the torpid desert spirit, becomes the garden of the Lord, filled with all the growing plants of righteousness, to the glory of his grace. Christ as the Sun, is also the source of *beauty*. It is only by the diffusion of his rays, that nature is adorned with all her rich variety of shades and hues, and becomes one variegated scene of beauty and loveliness. And the diversity of colors which flowers and plants display, arises from their absorbing a different quantity of the peculiar properties of light. How forcibly this applies to Jesus. All the beauties of righteousness, all the graces and virtues of the

christian character are derived from him. He transforms the mind into his own likeness, from one degree of glory unto another, until the soul is adorned with all that loveliness, which will render it meet to be transplanted to the fair and unfading regions of the paradise above.

July 21.

CHRIST THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

PART III.—*Mal.* iv. 2.

CHRIST as the Sun is distinguished also for the *joy* and *comforts* his beams diffuse abroad. It is pleasant to behold the natural sun, to bask in the warming beams of the orb of day. When he sets, all nature appears clothed in drooping melancholy, and when he arises, the hills and vales and trees, all seem to be gladdened and to rejoice. Then the animated creation bound into action, and the feathered choristers, in ten thousands diversified anthems fill the air with melody and joy. So when Christ shines into the mind, then the racking anxieties of fear and despondency are expelled, then the night of spiritual distress terminates, and then dawns the happy morning, that introduces into the heart, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost through believing; then the soul can arise and rejoice for the

glory of the Lord has arisen within it. This sun is styled the sun of Righteousness. He is the fountain of all righteousness; the light which emanates from him is pure and hallowed light; the life he produces is a life of spiritual excellence, a life of holiness to the Lord. The fruit which he causes his people to bear, is fruit of righteousness, and the beauty he confers, is the reflected beauty of his own purity; and the joy which he imparts is not the foolish and carnal joy of the pleasure taker, or the prosperous worldling, but the joy of the spirit, a peace from God, and which resembles the peace he enjoys, seraphic, heavenly, and divine.

“Eternal sun of righteousness,
Display thy beams divine,
And cause the beauties of thy face
Upon my heart to shine.

Light, in thy light, O may I see,
Thy grace and mercy prove,
Reviv'd and cheer'd and blest by thee,
The God of pardoning love.”

July 22.

CHRIST RESTORING BARTIMEUS.

And Jesus said unto him receive thy sight.—Luke xviii. 42

WHEREVER Jesus went there were always objects of misery, ready to receive his compassionate and

miraculous aid. As he was journeying to Jericho, his ears were assailed by the importunate cries of a blind beggar, named Bartimeus. Hearing the sound of numerous footsteps he enquired of the crowd what it meant, and was informed that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. Then he earnestly cried out, "Jesus thou Son of David have mercy on me." That part of the multitude which preceded Christ, rebuked him, that he should hold his peace, but then he cried the more, the more earnestly, the more loudly, "Thou Son of David have mercy on me." Jesus heard the supplication, and stood still, and said, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" And he said, "Lord that I may receive my sight." Then did Jesus say unto him, "Receive thy sight, thy faith hath saved thee." In the misery of Bartimeus, we have a striking exhibition of fallen sinners,—blind, poor, and necessarily wretched. However intelligent men may be in matters of science, or literature, as to spiritual things, they are totally ignorant, they are really and absolutely blind. And however deplorable natural blindness may be, spiritual blindness is infinitely more lamentable. With the one there may be the enjoyment of the favour and love of God, but to the wicked there is no peace, for the face of the Lord is set against them. And as natural blindness is often accompanied by poverty and misery, so also is darkness of mind. Sinners are not only blind, but wretched, and poor, and naked. They

are strangers to all real good, and possess not any of the solid and abiding riches of the mind. Like Bartimeus, they have to rely on human resources for all their aid, and upon an uncertain fleeting world for all the imaginary good which they possess.

July 23.

CHRIST RESTORING BARTIMEUS.

PART II.—*Luke* xviii. 42.

HAPPY for Bartimeus that Jesus passed that way; otherwise he might have remained in darkness to the day of his death. Happy for the blind and wretched sinner, that Jesus came to seek, and to save that which was lost: otherwise the darkness of the mind would have settled down into the blackness of darkness for ever. It was for the happiness of Bartimeus, and it is not less for the happiness of every man, that Christ was manifested to remove human woe, and to destroy the works of the devil. Bartimeus availed himself of the event of Christ's passing to solicit mercy. And the doctrine of the gospel is this, that Jesus is nigh unto them who call upon him. Yea, that "the word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that is the word of faith which we preach." But Christ's mercy must be solicited, — solicited earnestly, with all holy importunity, and in faith. Bar-

timeus received Jesus of Nazareth as the Son of David, as the long expected Messiah, as the King of Israel. And a reception of Jesus by us is indispensable to the obtaining of his favour and forgiving love. If thou believest in him with all thy heart, thou shalt be saved. In supplicating Christ's aid opposition may be expected. The multitude attempted to silence Bartimeus, they cried, "hold thy peace,"—they knew not his misery, they cared not for his welfare. And whoever came to Jesus that was not thus assailed? Sceptics will cry hold your peace, religion is a fable, an invention of men, a gross delusion. The profane will say, hold your peace; eat, drink, and be merry, and let religion take care for itself. The worldling will cry, hold thy peace; gold is the principal thing, be anxious for wealth, for money answereth all things. The formalist will cry hold your peace, why be so earnest, live decently, and worship reverently, and profess a little religion and all shall be well. Woe be to the man that hearkens to these enemies of our welfare, to these destroyers of our happiness. Conscience says, cry for mercy. The word says, cry for mercy, and the heralds of the cross are directed to assure you that, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

July 24.

CHRIST RESTORING BARTIMEUS.

PART III.—*Luke xviii. 42.*

BARTIMEUS cried the more, when the people said, hold thy peace. And this was necessary, or his voice would have been lost in the clamour of the people. So, when hindrances from Satan or from men present themselves, it is then absolutely indispensable that with increasing earnestness we should cry the more, and thus agonizing press through the strait gate, and seize the kingdom of heaven by prayer, seeing the violent take it by force. Thus it was that Jesus was arrested in his course, and stood still; and on hearing the request, he said, “receive thy sight.” So will it be with the earnest seeker of mercy, Christ will hear, he will not turn away his face from them, but will most readily grant them their requests, and bless them with his salvation. He said to Bartimeus, “thy faith hath saved thee,” Not that faith itself could give the sightless eyeballs light, — but faith saved him instrumentally, by laying hold of Christ’s compassion and power, and thus receiving from Jesus the necessary efficiency. So it is that faith saves the soul. Jesus is the depository of all spiritual blessings,—in him is pardon, peace, and righteousness, and eternal redemption. By receiving Jesus, we therefore receive all that is treasured up in him,

and all that he is, and has becomes ours. Faith brings the soul into happy contact with the Lord, it lays hold of his merits, it extracts the virtue from his person and work, and by it, we obtain all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus. Have you thus believed in Jesus? Has he said to you, receive your sight? Have you experienced his redeeming power and saving grace? Do you know in whom you have believed? Are you now light in the Lord, and like Bartimeus have you arisen to follow in his steps, and to glorify God, if so,—

“Let heart and tongue attune his praise
Through the remainder of your days,
And when you join the powers above,
Your souls shall better sing his love.”

July 25.

THE SCAPE GOAT A TYPE OF CHRIST.

And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel and all their transgressions in all their sins.—Levit. xvi. 21.

How very strikingly was Jesus exhibited in the appointment of the ordinance of the Scape Goat. But the figure would not have been perfect, had not there been, in connection with the Scape Goat, a Goat which was slain, the blood of which

was to be put upon the altar, by which atonement was made for the people. Let us then confine our thoughts for a few moments to the Scape Goat. We are reminded first of the *substitution* of Christ in the place of sinners. The sins, iniquities, and transgressions of the people were figuratively put upon the head of the Scape Goat, and then it was dismissed into the wilderness, and was never more seen. Now this receives striking illustration from such passages as the following. "He hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin." (2 Cor. v. 21.) "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." (Isaiah liii. 6. 9.) "Behold the lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world." (John i. 29.) In these as well as in many other passages, the substitution of Jesus is very clearly taught, and unless thus interpreted, they speak the language of ambiguity itself. Moses and the prophets taught and warned men, and were appointed as leaders of the people, but never is it said of any but Jesus, that "he died for the ungodly" that he is the "sacrifice for sins, &c." And this substitution of Jesus has made ample satisfaction for sin. All the claims of holiness, justice, and truth have been fully met, the law has been magnified and the inexpressible price of his infinitely precious blood has been paid for our redemption. God in the harmonious exercise of all his illustrious perfections can be the just God as well as the justifier of the ungodly, who believeth in Jesus. In this substitu-

tion sin has been fully punished, and therefore the sinner may be freely saved.

July 26.

THE SCAPE GOAT A TYPE OF CHRIST.

PART II. *Levit.* xvi. 21.

IN reference to the Scape Goat we notice further, that all *sorts* of sins were placed upon his head and borne away. Hence three words are used, "Iniquities," probably referring to original depravity, "Transgressions," violations of the positive law, and "Sins," omissions of God's holy commands. But perhaps intended more particularly to shew that sins of every kind were thus atoned for. Now Jesus has made a real atonement for every species of sins, transgressions, and iniquities. Hence he proclaimed "that all manner of sin and blasphemy should be forgiven unto men." Hence also, by faith in Christ, "we are justified from all things." As all *sorts* of sins were laid on the Scape Goat, so also the sins of *all* the *congregation* was thus borne away. Now the sacrifice of Jesus extends to the whole world, and to every man. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world." (1 John ii. 2.) Observe finally the way in which the benefits of the Scape Goat's substitution were received.

Aaron was to lay his hands upon the head of the Goat and to confess over him all the iniquities and transgressions of the people. How expressive of that genuine repentance and faith, by which we receive all the saving benefits of the sacrifice of Christ. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us, but if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

“My faith would lay her hand
On that dear head of thine,
While like a penitent I stand,
And there confess my sin

Believing, we rejoice,
To see the curse remove;
We bless the Lamb with cheerful voice,
And sing redeeming love.”

July 27.

CHRIST HEALING THE BLIND AND DUMB DEMONIAK.

Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind and dumb, and he healed him.—Matt. xii. 22.

How diversified, aggravated, and numberless are the effects which sin has produced on the human race. All the maladies of the body and all the miseries of the mind are to be traced to

this one source. In the case before us, we have a melancholy exhibition of human wretchedness and suffering — one who was possessed with an evil spirit, constantly under the overpowering influences of a devil—no longer free to act as a reasonable, intelligent being, but constantly acting under the supernatural energies of an unholy, malignant spirit. The effects of this possession we have already specified — for he was blind and dumb. How truly deplorable must have been his state — a stranger to all the beauties of creation, and incapable of holding intercourse with society. Either of these maladies exclude from most of the rational enjoyments of life; when combined, they must have formed the climax of human woe. Happy, however, for him that he was brought to Christ. His maladies rendered him dependent for this to others; for he could not have found Jesus, or known of him but for others. And what was the result? Why, Jesus exerted his compassionate, almighty power, and healed him. Nothing is said of the way and manner, and this is of inferior moment; but it is said that he healed him, so that he both spake and saw. Darkness was rolled away from his sightless eye-balls, and his tongue was loosened, and, as a matter of course, the hellish demon was cast out. We are reminded in this case of the condition of sinners under the influence of Satan, and ignorant of God, and speechless as regards his glory and praise. Divine

grace illuminates the mind, expels the reigning foe, and fills the mouth with songs of thankfulness to the God of salvation. Let it be the earnest and constant solicitude of believers, to bring their sin-sick friends and neighbours to Jesus. Attention to the souls of men is a beautiful evidence of the reality of our own conversion and acceptation with God.

July 28.

CHRIST BLESSING LITTLE CHILDREN.

And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.—Mark x. 16.

THE tender regards of Christ embraced every description of character; he came to bless all ranks and degrees of men. We do not wonder, therefore, that little children did not escape his favourable notice. God has planted in the human breast a strong attachment to offspring. Under this feeling, no doubt, a number of affectionate mothers acted, when they brought their children to Christ. It seems the disciples wished to prevent their access to Jesus, which when he perceived, he said "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God." "And then he took **them up in his arms**, and put his hands upon them, and blessed them." Little

children obviously suffer much on account of sin. Before they can possibly have been guilty of actual transgression, they are liable to the most painful diseases, and even to death itself. We cannot doubt, however, but that all little children who thus die, are introduced into everlasting glory, "for of such is the kingdom of God." No doubt the blood-shedding of the Second Adam, the Lord from heaven, has amply provided for their salvation, and through his super-abounding grace, they are all heirs of eternal life. As being thus included in the arrangements of mercy, it is the duty of Christian parents to bring them to Christ. For what purpose were children of old brought to him? To be blessed. And this they received, for he took them into his heavenly arms, and placed his gracious hands upon them, and blessed them. We cannot now bring our children to the bodily presence of Jesus, but we can bear them up before the throne of grace. We can supplicate his blessing by fervent prayer. And, in the exercise of faith, we can intercede for his spirit and blessing to rest upon our offspring.

July 29.

CHRIST BLESSING LITTLE CHILDREN.

PART II. — *Mark* x. 16.

THERE are many reasons which ought to induce

us to feel deeply for our children's welfare, and as far as possible to bring them to Christ. We ought to do so, because of the perils which will surround them, so soon as they can distinguish between good and evil. They cannot long breathe the tainted atmosphere of this depraved world without being affected with the disease of sin. Moral evil is presented in such diversity of form, and with such powerful attractions, that nothing but the special grace of Jesus can preserve them from its deploring effects. We ought also to bring them to Christ, because of our professed love to them. To regard only their bodies and temporal comforts is all that can be expected from those who are strangers to God. But Christians must surely value most of all, and love with greatest intensity the immortal spirit, the imperishable jewel, of which the body is only the material casket. Love to their souls is the soul of love. We ought also thus to bring them to Christ, because of our solemn responsibility, and the account we shall have to surrender at the last day. They are *our* children, committed to our care, entrusted to our attention: we must finally give up our trust to God. But how awful will it then be for us, if they have been vile, and we have restrained them not—if they have been treated merely as animal beings, whilst their immortal concerns have been totally neglected. Finally, we ought to bring them to Jesus, because we may indeed expect his favourable regards and

blessing. Hannah gave Samuel to the Lord, and he accepted him, and crowned him with his favour and blessing. The mothers in Israel brought their children to Christ, and he received them freely, and laid his hands upon them, and blessed them. We also, in like manner, may confidently expect his approbation and blessing.

July 30.

CHRIST THE DOOR.

I am the door.—John x. 7.

JESUS has a peculiar claim to the metaphorical title here expressed. In reference to every thing that relates to the happiness and dignity of man here, or to his advancement in felicity and glory to come, he is the door, the only way of access. Consider man as an alien or outcast, a wandering, dying rebel against his God, and then Jesus is the only door, or way of access, to the divine favour and family. It is when we come to God, exercising faith in his Son, that we are accepted of him, are freely justified, and have the privilege of becoming his adopted sons. To his spiritual house Jesus is the only door. God will not, and, by reason of his eternal spotlessness, cannot treat with us but through the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus is also the door to all the privileges of his church. By union to the head

only can we derive that spiritual nourishment which the members of the mystical body require. By faith in Jesus, we have an evangelical right to all the privileges and immunities of his people. Then all is ours, — the word, the Gospel preached, the promises recorded, the precious ordinances, and the all-essential influences of the Spirit, are all ours. Then may we dwell in his banqueting-house, and sit down at his table with great delight: Jesus is also the door to communion with the Father. To God, there is but one way of access, and that is by his Son. Whether it be by prayer, or meditation, or praise, we only can approach Jehovah, and hold intercourse with him by coming through this door. Jesus, too, is the only door to eternal glory. He is the way into the holiest place of all. By him we come to God graciously now, and by him we shall enter into the paradise above, for, as our forerunner, he hath passed before us, taken possession of heaven for his people, and waits to receive them unto himself, that where he is, there they may be also.

July 31.

CHRIST THE DOOR.

PART II.—*John x. 7.*

WE have seen that Jesus is the door to the divine favour and family, to the privileges of the

Church on earth, and to the glories of the Church in heaven. Now, as the way of access, Jesus is a constantly open door. He became the door from the instant the first promise was announced, and he has been the open door from that period to the present time. The way to God has not been closed for a single moment. During the thousands of years that have rolled onwards in their changing course, he has remained fixed in his mediatorial office, and has changed not. How blessed is the consideration that, whether by day or night, the seeking sinner can never find this door of hope closed against him. Then he is also a door for all. None have been excluded from God's compassionate regards, for he hath loved the world, and Jesus is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, and the Gospel freely invites all, without respect to country, age, or character, to come unto God by him. There never was, nor is, nor ever will be, any other exclusion than that of the sinner's impenitency and unbelief. We remark, finally, that Jesus is the only door. There is but one Mediator between God and us. There is but one name given, one Saviour found, one sacrifice offered, one Gospel preached—that name and Saviour is Jesus—that sacrifice, the blood of his cross—and that Gospel, the Gospel of Christ. There is but one door for the profligate and the moral, the profane and the professor, the publican and the

pharisee. There is but one door for the rich and the poor, the learned and the illiterate, the aged and the young, the monarch and the slave. In short, there is but this door for the whole of our guilty world. He is the door, and whosoever refuseth or neglecteth him, must be excluded from heaven, but whosoever entereth in by him, shall obtain eternal life.

Aug. 1.

CHRIST THE DOOR.

PART III.—*John* x. 7.

IF Christ be the only door, then how desirable is it that we see how we stand connected with him. Let us inquire, then, as to our *knowledge* of Christ as the door. Have we right views of our necessity of such a door? Have we felt our distance from God, and have we perceived the glorious adaptation of Jesus in his person and work to bring us nigh to him? Have we beheld in Jesus the very object adapted to our spiritual need, in whom there is a fulness of grace to meet all our exigencies and supply all our wants. Jesus cannot be the door to us unless we know him, for this is life eternal, to know the true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. Let us also ascertain as to our *approach* to God by this door. Have we come to him and

believed in him, availed ourselves of his merits, trusted in his mediation, and thus obtained forgiveness of sins and peace with God? If we have used Christ as the door, then are we no longer without, no longer at a distance, no longer condemned; but now are we reconciled to God, and by the testimony of the Holy Spirit to our spirits, we know that we are the sons of God. Then, let us ascertain also as to our estimate of this door. Do we value it above all things? for to them that believe Christ is precious, precious always, yea, superlatively precious. If we value this door, we shall extol it by our lips of sanctified praise, and by lives of ardent love and holy obedience to Christ. How necessary it is that we constantly avail ourselves of this door. We cannot hold intercourse with God for a moment but through Christ, and God cannot behold us with complacency except when he beholds us in the face of his anointed one. Then Christ is emphatically our life and salvation, and the life that we live must be a life of faith in the Son of God, who loved us and gave himself for us.

Aug. 2.

CHRIST CURING THE MAN
BORN BLIND.

He went his way, therefore, and washed, and came, seeing. — John ix. 7.

BLINDNESS is one of the greatest calamities next to the loss of reason, to which human nature is liable. In several instances, this lamentable condition was remedied through the mercy and power of Christ. The person to whom our attention is now directed, had been born blind, so that his case, was humanly speaking without hope. Jesus possessed all power both in heaven and earth, and he came to exert that power in removing the miseries of our race. This poor blind man, arrested the attention of Christ. His disciples were under the influence of a prejudice which has most extensively prevailed, that where there is peculiar suffering, there must have been aggravated transgressions; they asked therefore, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? how necessary it is that we speak tenderly of those, who may be the subjects of severe providential visitations. For Jesus replied, “Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents,” that is any more than others, not in any aggravated degree, “but that the works of God should be manifest in him.” It is the will of God whose sovereignty is uncontroulable, whose wis-

dom is infinite, and whose goodness is over all his works, to allow a diversity of condition to exist, that his own glory, and the ends of his providence, may be more fully answered. In the present case, this poor afflicted man, became a joyous subject of Christ's restoring power and grace. While the disciples were reasoning about the cause of the man's suffering, Jesus in his loving kindness, was contemplating his cure. How much better to fall into the hands of the Lord, than into those of men. Let Christ's example induce us, not to waste our time in vain speculations, about the causes and effects of evil, but rather how we can be instrumental under God, in most efficiently removing it. What an illustrious model do we behold in Jesus, who went about doing good, and never wearied, until his work and life terminated together.

Aug. 3.

CHRIST CURING THE MAN BORN BLIND.

PART II. — *John ix. 7.*

JESUS having replied to his disciples, said, "I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work, as long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world"; and immediately he commenced opera-

tions for the imparting of sight to the man. In most cases Jesus employed means, in effecting his wonderful works. In this case the process adopted was of the most unlikely character possible. An ointment is made 'tis true, but then it was clay and spittle, and apparently more likely to make a seeing man blind, than to cause a blind man to see. With Christ all things were possible. The unlikely character of the means, only more fully displayed the glory of his power and Godhead. With this ointment, therefore he anointed the man's eyes, and directed him to go and wash in the Pool of Siloam, the man went, and the miracle was thus obvious to those assembled at the porch, and he returned to his home seeing. What a display is here presented of the Almighty influence which Jesus possessed. An ordinary case of blindness, may be cured by the skill of the surgeon, but when was it ever known that sight was imparted to one born blind, when obviously the organ of vision were entirely wanting or imperfectly formed. But Jesus knew the case perfectly: he who formed the eye could not but see; and he who imparts that exquisitely delicate organ of the eye to his numerous creatures, knew well how to confer it upon this poor blind man. The miracle was clearly *genuine*. There could not be any deception. A greater difference there cannot be than between light and darkness, blindness and sight. The miracle was a display of great *mercy*. Jesus could be moved by nothing but

this; indeed, his work from first to last was one of disinterested benevolence, to a miserable and unworthy world. It was also *gratuitous*. Indeed, what could a poor man give for a boon so great, for a blessing so unspeakable? All the communications of Christ are without money and without price, and thus they are accessible to the most wretched and indigent of the human race.

Aug. 4.

THE CONFESSION OF THE MAN THAT WAS BORN BLIND.

*One thing I know, whereas I was blind, now I see.—
John ix. 25.*

How marvellous was the prejudice of the Jews against Christ. They heard his pure and heavenly doctrine, they saw his unblameable life, and witnessed his benevolent miracles, and yet they professed to believe that he was an impostor, an enemy of God, and a deceiver of men. On the occasion of the blind man being cured, they seem to have displayed that infatuated spirit and temper in the highest degree. It was the sabbath when Christ had cured the man, and therefore they at once concluded, despite of the astounding and unheard of miracle before them, that Christ was a wicked person, and only deserving of scorn and contempt.

Nay more than this, they endeavoured to shake the testimony of the man, and if possible they would have caused him to prevaricate, that Christ might have been robbed of the glory of the miracle altogether. His parents they did terrify into inglorious silence, and they ungratefully and wickedly said, "By what means he seeth we know not." To meet their sophistical reasoning, the man himself might not find himself able, but he made a plain and straight-forward confession, "One thing I know, whereas I was blind, now I see." Now this was experimental evidence, and of all evidence it is the most satisfactory and decisive. He had undergone a change of the most palpable and blessed description: and he did not shrink from avowing both the agent and the means employed in producing it. My dear readers, there is another sort of blindness—blindness of mind—an understanding darkened by sin—the want of spiritual sight: this calamity has overspread the whole family of man; and to remove this was one great design of Christ's mission to our world.

"He came, from darkening scales of vice
To clear the inward sight,
And on the eye-balls of the blind
To pour celestial light."

Are you conscious of your true condition? are you saying, Lord, impart unto me sight! Believe the testimony of his gospel, and you shall see the glory

of God, and be able to say, "whereas, once I was blind, now I see."

Aug. 5.

SUFFERING FOR THE TESTIMONY OF CHRIST.

And they cast him out.—John ix. 34.

BECAUSE the man who was born blind, would not join with the Jews, in condemning Jesus who had given him sight, they brought all the weight of their ecclesiastical excommunication to bear upon him, "and they cast him out,"—cast him out of their synagogue, and declared him unworthy of fellowship with the people of God. Why what had he done? Had he violated the laws of God, and rendered himself obnoxious to those whose province it was to enforce them? No, all that he had done—his whole offence consisted, in fearing God rather than men, in speaking the whole truth openly, and in confessing Jesus, who had conferred upon him the unspeakably precious gift of sight. Yes, for this was the man persecuted to the utmost of their ecclesiastical authority, and cut off from the external privileges of the children of God. But surely to be removed from the society of such a blind and callous hearted people was rather a blessing, than a curse. How indifferent we may be to the curses of men, if we enjoy the

approbation of God, and the testimony of a good conscience. Besides, afterwards we find that Jesus met with him again, and it is clear that he became one of his disciples, and doubtless an especial object of his favour and grace. All who honour Christ, and live godly, may expect to suffer persecution. If the world hated the lovely and benevolent Jesus and reviled him, we need not wonder that it will hate and revile all his disciples. Christ endured the cross with all its shame, before he was glorified and obtained the joy that was set before him, and we must suffer with him, in order that we may be glorified together. But what is persecution or reproach, or ignominy, or even death itself, when compared with the blessings which he now imparts, and the glory which he shall confer upon all who love him. Yea, doubtless, and we count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord,—

“ Who suffer with our Master here,
They shall before his face appear,
And by his side sit down,
To patient faith the prize is sure;
And all that to the end endure,
The cross, shall wear the crown.”

Aug. 6.

JESUS THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

I am the good shepherd.—John x. 10.

THERE is no title more frequently applied to Jesus in the divine word than that of the shepherd. He is addressed by the Psalmist as the Shepherd of Israel. Ezekiel speaks of him as God's servant David, who shall feed his people and be their shepherd. The Apostle in his letter to the Hebrews, styles him the *great* Shepherd of the Sheep. And Peter referring to the day of his second advent, describes him as the *chief* Shepherd, who shall appear and give the crown of glory that fadeth not away. Jesus says, "I am the good shepherd." As a shepherd, Jesus hath his flock, which consists of all who truly love and serve him. This flock hath existed in the world from the time of Abel to the present hour. The sheep of this flock are easily distinguished from the men of the world, by their meekness, patience, goodness, and usefulness. They are a separated and holy flock. Christ hath found them when wandering from him on the dark mountains of iniquity, and hath borne them on his shoulders to his own fold. His likeness they bear, his spirit they possess, his words they hear and obey. To follow him is their pleasure and delight. And as their shepherd, he watches over them, and preserves them from their numerous enemies,—he also

leadeth them into green pastures, and by the sides of still waters, he never allows any evil to befall them; and from his abundance they ever receive a supply of all their need, and the Lord being their shepherd they never want. He also bindeth up their wounds, and healeth all their diseases, and after having made them meet, for the celestial pastures of Zion's fruitful hill, he receives them to himself, and where he is, they are for ever, also—

“ In pastures where salvation grows,
He makes me feed, he makes me rest;
There living water gently flows,
And all the food's divinely blest.

My wand'ring feet his ways mistake,
But he restores my soul to peace,
And leads me for his mercy's sake,
In the fair paths of righteousness.!”

Aug. 7.

JESUS THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

PART II.—*John* x. 10.

JESUS, as the Shepherd of his people, has an interest in his sheep, which none other possibly could have: for they are the work of his hands; he made them, and formed them for his own glory. By his care they are daily preserved, they wait on him constantly, and are daily supplied with good.

But he is particularly interested in them as his redeemed property, as the flock purchased with his own infinitely precious blood. As the good Shepherd, he laid down his life for the sheep. He ransomed them from death and from the power of the grave. And,

“When, like wandering sheep, they'd strayed,
He brought them to his fold again.”

And in so doing he manifested the exceeding riches of his love and grace. Yes, so greatly did he love them, that as the Shepherd, the sword of justice awoke against him, and he allowed it to smite him, and to pierce him through with many sorrows, that the sheep might go free. Surely, greater love than this cannot be displayed — how deserving, then, the title of Good Shepherd. Besides, Jesus is possessed of all those qualifications by which his sheep are preserved in perfect safety. His eye is ever upon the whole of his flock; he holds every one of them in the hollow of his hand, they cannot perish, neither can any pluck them from thence. And he gives to his sheep life everlasting: they live in him, and by him, and to him, now, but they shall also live with him in the heavenly sheepfold, and go out no more for ever. Yes, happy are they who belong to his flock.

“Though in the paths of death they tread,
With gloomy horrors overspread,

Their stedfast hearts shall fear no ill,
For thou, O Lord, art with them still;
Thy friendly hand shall give them aid,
And guide them through the dreadful shade!"

And, after they have passed through the dreary
scenes of mortality,

"The Lamb shall lead his heavenly flock
Where living fountains rise,
And love divine shall wipe away
The sorrows of their eyes."

Aug. 8.

CHRIST FAIRER THAN THE SONS OF MEN.

Fairer than the children of men.—Ps. xlv. 2.

WHILE Jesus was truly and really a man, yet even as such, seeing he had not a defiled nature, he possessed a glorious pre-eminence over the sons of men. Moral goodness and the beauties of holiness were possessed by others in various degrees. Some excelled in possessing a spirit of devotion, as Enoch and David, others were remarkable for their fidelity and integrity, as Abraham, Moses, and Daniel, while others were men of holy courage and moral heroism, as Joshua, Caleb, and Nehemiah. Jesus was fairer and more interesting than any of them; for in him all the virtues and graces of the

whole were concentrated. He possessed every excellency, and that in the highest degree. In him was no defect, no frailty, nothing to lessen the influence of his heavenly doctrines, or his holy life. Draw a portrait where there shall be a rich assemblage of every thing that is lovely and graceful, without any thing being redundant or deficient, and then you have truly before you the image of the blessed Jesus, who is "fairer than the children of men." This perfection of beauty was evinced in all the offices he assumed, in all the relationships he formed, and in all the actions he performed. As a teacher, grace was poured into his lips; as a prophet, he possessed all the plenitude of the Holy Spirit; as a priest, he was higher than the sons of men, a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec; as a king, he reigns in equity and in truth, the sceptre of his kingdom is a sceptre of righteousness. As the Saviour, he came with his heart overflowing with compassion and mercy, and freely received into his favour the most worthless and perishing of our fallen race. In him mercy and truth met together, righteousness and peace embraced each other. In him was combined all the glories of the Godhead, and all the excellencies of which our nature is capable. Believers on earth and glorified spirits and angels in heaven all concur in this divine statement, that he "is fairer than the children of men."

Aug. 9.

PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST

An unchangeable priesthood. — Heb. vii. 24.

THE apostle is speaking of Jesus, and showing the superiority of his person and office over those of the law. He especially refers to this particular that they, being merely men, were constantly changing, and did not continue, by reason of death, on the other hand, Christ, having life and immortality in himself, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Let us, however, trace those resemblances which existed between those priests whose offices were clearly typical, and the great antetype the Lord Jesus Christ. The priests under the law were *chosen* and *appointed* by God: the tribe whence they should be selected, and all other things, were fixed by the Lord. So Jesus was God's called, his elect, and chosen servant: hence we read of the Father sending his Son, giving his Son, not sparing his Son, and, after his appearance, declaring his perfect approbation of his Son, and calling upon all men to "hear him." The priests under the law were to be without *bodily blemish* or *mental infirmity*. Now, this was more than realized in Jesus; for he was not only a perfect man as it respects his corporeal frame, and the faculties of his mind, but he was, without moral infirmity, a lamb without spot, "holy, harmless, undefiled, sepa-

rate from sinners." The ancient priests were set apart to their office by the *washing of water* and with *holy oil*. So Jesus, having dwelt in privacy for nearly thirty years, appeared to be initiated into his holy office, by passing through the waters of baptism, and by the anointing influence of the Holy Ghost. For when he was baptized, the Holy Spirit descended and lighted upon him, and a voice from the excellent Glory, proclaimed his divinity, and attested, that in him the Father was well pleased. Such were the significant and striking circumstances connected with the appointment of Jesus to his Priestly office.

Aug. 10.

PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST

PART II. — *Heb. vii. 24.*

LET us now consider the especial work which devolved upon the ancient priests. They were appointed to teach the people: hence it is written, "For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth." (Mal. ii. 7) How illustriously did Jesus fulfil this part of his work. What numerous discourses he delivered: what a spiritual and striking illustration did he give of the moral law in his sermon on the mount. He taught the way of salvation fully, and brought

life and immortality to light by his gospel. He was truly a teacher sent from God, and never man spake, as he spake. The priests also were to *pray* for the people and to *bless* them. Jesus went up and down blessing the people, — he spent whole nights in prayers and supplications for a perishing world, — he offered up one extended intercessory prayer on behalf of his church to the end of the world. He expired interceding for his murderers, and exclaiming, “Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.” The priests also *killed* and *offered* the *sacrifices* to God. Now Jesus did not appear as a priest without a sacrifice; for it behoved that a victim should be slain, for without shedding of blood there could be no remission. He therefore presented to God the sacrifice of himself, — he presented his own life, and shed his own blood, that it might redeem a guilty world unto God. He was both the offerer, and the lamb slain that took away the sins of the world. Hence says the Apostle, “But now once in the end of the world, hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” (Heb. ix. 26.)

“The Lord in the day,
Of mercy did lay,
Our sins on the Lamb, and he bore them away,
He died to atone,
For sins not his own;
The Father hath punish'd for us his dear Son.”

The priest not only offered the sacrifices, but also sprinkled the *blood* upon the *altar*, and thus the worshipper and gift were acceptable to God. Jesus in like manner hath entered into heaven with his infinitely precious blood, and having sprinkled the throne of grace, we may now come boldly and obtain mercy, and find grace to help us in every time of need. Are we savingly acquainted with Christ's priestly character? Have we come to God by the way he hath consecrated for us? Have we felt his blood applied to our consciences, and can we rejoice that he loved us, and gave himself for us?

Aug. 11.

CHRIST A GREAT HIGH PRIEST.

For such an High Priest became us.—Heb. vii. 26.

As Christ was typified by the common priesthood, so he was still more particularly represented by the High Priest, to the particulars of which let us now direct our attention. The garments of the high priests were of a peculiar description,—there was first of all the *Ephod*, a loose white linen garment, in which were set two onyx stones, whereon was engraved the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, and which was to be borne upon the shoulders of the high priest; with this garment the high priest always appeared in the sanctuary before

God. Herein is Christ's mediatorial work for his church set forth, and the entire dependance of all his people beautifully represented. He builds the temple of the Lord and he bears all its glory,—he is the sufficiency and strength of his people,—he bears them ever before God in the holiest place of all. Then the high priest had also a *breast-plate*; in this plate there were also set in precious stones the number of the tribes, and they were placed in a *four* square form, so as to represent their beauty and order, and with this too, the high priest appeared before God. In the breast-plate were also the mystical Urim and Thummim, signifying, light and perfection, by which God communicated his mind to the priests. In this how the love of Jesus is exhibited. He has his church engraven on his heart. He lived with it in his heart and died with it in his heart, and now standing before the throne of the Eternal, he has it still upon his heart. And it is only through Christ that God reveals his mind to man. He is therefore the true Urim and Thummim, the only light and perfection. For no man hath seen God at any time, but Jesus our High Priest hath declared him: so that he who hath seen the Son, hath also seen the Father, for he dwelleth in the Father, and the Father dwelleth in him.

Aug. 12.

CHRIST A GREAT HIGH PRIEST.

PART II. — *Heb. vii. 26.*

LET us now consider the other garments which distinguished the high priest. Among these was the *robe* of the *Ephod*, — this robe was fastened round the neck and reached down to the knees, around the skirts of which, was the representation of pomegranates, by which the robe was beautified, and also golden bells were appended, so that the people heard the sound when the high priest went into the holy place to burn incense before the Lord. Herein is strikingly represented the appearance of our Lord clothed in the vestments of salvation, and appearing before God to make intercession for us. There was also the *plate* of the *Mitre*, — this was a golden plate which was fixed to the forehead, on which was engraven “Holiness to the Lord.” Herein was the immaculateness of Jesus emblematically set forth. Holiness to the Lord was indeed engraven on all his actions, words, and thoughts, — the law of God was indeed within his heart, — all his life was distinguished by unblemished purity, and absolute perfection. Then there was also the *Girdle* of *coloured needle-work*, by which the garments were all bound together. Now this was designed to denote the truth, constancy, and unchangeableness of Christ. Hence it is writ-

ten, "Righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins." (Is. xi. 5.) Hence too, when John had that splendid vision of the Redeemer, "He was girt round about the breast with a golden girdle." (Rev. i. 13.) Such then were those priestly vestments which typified the excellency of the Redeemer's person, and work. Such a high priest became us, who was holy, undefiled, and separate from sinners. Let him be the subject of our constant contemplations: we cannot be too intimate with the leading features of his glorious person, nor can we too clearly conceive of his qualifications for the priestly office. In this way will our love be inflamed, our confidence established, and our hopes encouraged.

Aug. 13.

CHRIST A GREAT HIGH PRIEST.

PART III.-- *Heb. vii. 26.*

It was the prerogative of the High Priest only to offer the great annual atoning sacrifice; to present holy incense unto the Lord, in the holiest place; to determine all controversies among the people; and to come forth and bless the people in the name of the Lord. Now, in Jesus the substance of all these things are clearly and fully realized. He offered to God the great

universal sacrifice for the guilt of a lost world: he made a complete atonement for sin, by the shedding of his precious blood: and with his own blood he entered into the holiest place, and there he offers the incense of his all-prevalent intercession on behalf of all his redeemed people: from thence also hath he sent his spirit to bless his church with light, and comfort, and joy, and to lead them into all truth, and, finally, to eternal glory. Besides, in the end of this age or dispensation he will come forth to consummate the glory of his church, and to bless all his believing people with the fulness of redeeming grace and love. Hence says the Apostle, "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." (Heb. ix. 28.)

“Trusting in our Lord alone,
A great high priest we have —
Jesus, God's beloved Son,
Omnipotent to save
With the virtue of his blood.
Ascending to the holiest place,
Pass'd the heavenly courts, and stood
Before his Father's face.

There he ever lives to plead
His suffering people's cause:
Let us, then, pursue our head,
And bear his daily cross,

Hold our pure profession fast,
And faithful, unto death, remain;
Then the end of faith at last —
The crown of life we gain."

Aug. 14.

CHRIST A GREAT HIGH PRIEST.

PART IV. — *Heb. vii. 26.*

WHILE the high priests of old were types of the Lord Jesus, yet they only partially exhibited his excellencies and glories. In all things Christ hath the pre-eminence. Let this exercise be devoted to a few particulars wherein Christ's superior dignity is manifestly displayed. This will apply to the dignity of his *person*. He is truly the Son of God, of the same essence and glory with the Father. The priests of old were only men, of like passions with ourselves. Then Jesus is superior in the *immaculateness of his nature*. He was not merely officially holy, as a consecrated servant of God, but also really pure and spotless, without blemish or any such thing. He was without sin or the least taint of depravity or pollution. It is not saying too much to affirm that Jesus, in his mediatorial character, is holy even as God is holy. The priests of old were subject to all the sinful frailties to which our common nature is liable. Then Christ, as our

great high priest, is also superior in the *perfection* of his *sacrifice*. They presented merely animal oblations; they appeared before God with the blood of bulls, and goats, and lambs. Jesus offered the sacrifice of his humanity, hallowed by its being the consecrated shrine of the indwelling Deity. The blood he shed was the infinitely precious blood of his own heart — precious beyond all the computation of men, or the lofty conceptions of the highest angels in heaven. Jesus is superior also in the extent of his *priestly influence*. They were priests for an œconomy limited to the Jewish nation — Christ is the Priest of his Universal Church, that extends to all the nations that dwell on the face of the earth. The universe is his temple, and the benefits of his sacrifice are accessible to every child of the family of man. Finally, Christ, as our Great High Priest, is superior to the priests of old, in the *unchangeableness* and *perpetuity* of his office. They did not — indeed could not — continue, by reason of death. Jesus ever liveth. He had no predecessor, nor shall he ever have a successor; but abideth a priest continually. His priesthood shall only end when he shall deliver up his kingdom to the Father, and God be all in all. How instructive, consolatory, and appropriate are the following lines;

Where high the heavenly temple stands,
The house of God not made with hands,

A great high priest our nature wears —
The guardian of mankind appears —

He who for men their surety stood,
And poured on earth his precious blood,
Pursues in heaven his mighty plan —
The Saviour and the friend of man.

Our fellow-sufferer yet retains
A fellow-feeling of our pains,
And still remembers, in the skies,
His tears, and agonies, and cries.

In every pang that rends the heart
The man of sorrows hath a part;
He sympathizes with our grief,
And to the sufferer sends relief !”

Aug. 15.

CHRIST THE SMITTEN ROCK.

And that Rock was Christ.—1 Cor. x. 4.

THE passage which heads this exercise refers to a very interesting event in the history of the Israelites. When they had arrived at Rephidim there was no water for them to drink. Notwithstanding the goodness of the Lord which had been so graciously exhibited on many past occasions, the people began to blame Moses and to murmur against the Lord. Moses cried unto the Lord and God graciously heard his supplication, and

commanded him to take the rod wherewith he smote the river, and to smite the rock, and water should gush forth to supply all the wants of the people : and this Moses did, and behold, a plenteous stream of the liquid of life was given, and God was glorified in the midst of the people. Such was the literal event, which was obviously intended to typify that provision of the waters of salvation, through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus, "for that rock was Christ." It is clear that the condition of the people was one of extreme need: in a desert without water they must have speedily perished, and no human arm could avail them any thing under these circumstances. Such also is the spiritual state of our sinful world. Sin had turned the fair scenery of Eden into a dreary desert, a sterile wilderness. Those streams which once gave their crystal waters, had become, as it were, lost in subterraneous and inaccessible channels. Man was involved in all the wretchedness arising from spiritual thirst, and there was no created arm to rescue him from his perilous estate, or to supply him with the living stream. But God, who so graciously compassionated the thousands of Israel, and whose mercy alone spared that murmuring people, did, in the infiniteness of his grace, devise a glorious and ample remedy, that men might have an abundance of the water of life.

Aug. 16.

CHRIST THE SMITTEN ROCK.

PART II.—1 Cor. x. 4.

LET us then now see, the features of resemblance in the mode by which God gave water to the Israelites, and the waters of salvation to our world. And our attention is first called to the *Rock*. “Get thee upon the rock.” Now says the Apostle, “That rock was Christ.” In its *rugged* appearance, it strikingly exhibited the lowliness of Christ’s external appearance. Jesus appeared as “a root out of a dry ground.” His birth-place, parentage, poverty, and the circumstances of his disciples, all gave offence to the proud aspiring Jews, and to them he was a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence. The rock in its *massy* appearance, typified the Almighty strength and power of Christ. What is so truly an emblem of strength, as the rock? How firm it stands amidst the sweeping torrent, how unaffected by the fury of the storm, or the tempest’s roughest blast! such is Jesus, his power is infinite, nothing can exhaust his Almighty energy, or subdue his omnipotent power. All power is given unto him both in heaven and on earth. He is both the wisdom and power of God. The *elevation* of the rock shadowed forth the greatness and dignity of Christ. While Jesus abased himself in the assumption of

our nature, and in becoming the servant of servants, yet he possessed at the same time all the dignity and power of proper and essential Deity. Yes, in his mediatorial character he was made higher than the sons of men, greater than all the princes of the earth, or even the angels in heaven; but in his Divine nature he is Lord of all, and dwelleth in the heaven of heavens, and is in all things one with Jehovah, his equal and his fellow. As such, his greatness, strength, and immutability were strikingly typified by the rock of Horeb. The Lord is a rock, and his work is perfect.

Aug. 17.

CHRIST THE SMITTEN ROCK

PART III.—1 *Cor.* x. 4.

MOSES was directed by the Lord to take the rod, with which he had smitten the river in Egypt, the same rod by which he had divided the waters of the Red Sea, and to smite the rock which was before him. Now let us see how this typified the smiting of Jesus, for that "Rock was Christ." The rod was to *smite* the rock,—not to be stretched over it, not to be waved before it, nor yet to be cast upon it, but to smite it. Jesus too, was really and truly smitten, by men, by devils, and by the hand of Divine justice. His name, his body, and his soul

were all smitten; "He was despised, and rejected of men," and "it pleased the Lord to bruise him and to put him to grief." The rod *smote* the rock by *Divine authority*. So it pleased the Father, that Christ should suffer, and that thus he should make his soul an offering for sin. His Father cried, "Awake O sword against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered." (Zec. xiii. 7.) Hence when all the agonies of the garden and the cross were before his eyes, he said, "The cup which my Father giveth me, shall I not drink it?" The rock was to be smitten *publicly*, before the elders of the people. How applicable is this to the smiting of Jesus, — he was publicly dragged to the hall of the high priest, and before the elders was maligned and falsely accused, and buffeted, and spit upon. The elders adjudged him to death, paid the price of his blood to Judas, and stood by the cross, railing at him, and accusing him to the last. The rock was smitten for the *benefit* of the people. By this they were to be supplied with streams in the desert. So Jesus suffered, not for himself, but for us,—he was bruised for our iniquities,—he died to ransom our souls to God, and to open to our souls the fountain of the waters of life. Finally, the smitten rock, immediately yielded the flowing stream. So while Jesus was yet suspended on the cross, from his pierced side flowed a stream of blood and water, which Zechariah had spoken of, when

he said, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness."

"There is a fountain fill'd with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners plung'd into that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains."

Aug. 18.

CHRIST OUR ROCK OF SUPPLIES.

*For they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them ;
and that rock was Christ.—1 Cor. x. 4.*

No sooner had Moses smitten the rock, than the crystal stream burst forth, and the people were at once supplied with the fluid of life. Jesus by his atoning sacrifice has in like manner obtained the waters of salvation for a dying world. Let us compare the supplies in a few particulars. The supply from the rock was *supernatural*;—there was no natural connexion between the means and the end. Redemption in all its ages, from its being purposed in eternity, to being consummated in glory is altogether divine. Not any part of it is identified with what is human, but all of it is stamped with the impress of the finger of God. The supply was *abundant*;—not a few drops, but a flowing stream,

enough for all the people. Such are salvation's streams, there is no limitation, they are as copious as our world's circumference, and they are amply sufficient for every creature. O yes, all are invited to come to the waters, and to take an abundance of them freely without money, and without price. Then the supply was *lasting*;—it never failed them—they had it from day to day, in all their journies it followed them, and never ceased, until it was superseded by the milk and honey of the promised land. The supplies of grace also are abiding,—we may possess them now, and possess them always, and possess them until the streams of grace are lost in the ocean of boundless blessedness, at God's right hand, where there are pleasures for ever more. Are we participating of these refreshing, soul delighting streams? Have we humbly and earnestly come to Jesus, from whom only these supplies are to be obtained? He now through the medium of his gospel invites us to come unto him and drink, and the water which he imparts shall be within us as a well of water springing up unto eternal life.

“ ‘Whoever will,’ O gracious word !

May of this stream partake;

Come thirsty souls, and bless the Lord,

And drink for Jesu's sake.”

Aug. 19.

CHRIST OUR PASSOVER.

Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.—1 Cor. v. 7.

THE passover was one of the most celebrated ordinances of the Jewish dispensation. It was instituted on that memorable occasion when the destroying angel went through the length and breadth of the Egyptian land, but *passed over* the threshold of every house where the door-posts were sprinkled with the blood of the paschal lamb. The whole event was typical: it showed forth the misery and peril of our guilty world, and also exhibited the boundless mercy of God in providing a sacrifice for us, whereby we might not perish, but have everlasting life. What the lamb was typically, Christ is really: for he is our passover sacrificed for us. Let us briefly glance at the leading points of resemblance between the passover and the sacrifice of Christ. The passover was a *divine* institution; it was appointed of God: the whole was specifically devised and arranged by Jehovah. How very forcibly this applies to our redemption by Christ Jesus. The whole œconomy of salvation was the result of divine contrivance and appointment: the work was too vast and difficult to be effected by any thing else than the wisdom and power of God. Yes, the stream

of redeeming grace flowed from the throne of God and the Lamb. The passover was likewise connected with the *deliverance* of the Israelites from Egypt. Our passover is connected with the deliverance of the world from sin and the curse of the law. In Egypt the judgments of heaven were poured out, and in Egypt the Israelites were degraded and cruelly oppressed. God delivered them from both; the destroying angel came not near their dwellings, and the Lord led them forth from the land of toil and oppression, to a country of freedom, and a land flowing with milk and honey. By the sacrifice of Christ we are redeemed from the condemnation of eternal death, we are ransomed from the yoke of the devil, and are called to be joint-heirs with Christ of his kingdom and glory. What a redemption is this! — a redemption from sin to holiness, from wrath to reconciliation, from death to life, from hell to heaven, from the miseries of time and the woes of perdition to the joys of eternity. And this perfect, full, free, and eternal redemption, we obtain through Christ our “Passover sacrificed for us.”

Aug. 20.

CHRIST OUR PASSOVER.

PART II. — 1 Cor. v. 7.

LET us now glance at the sacrifice of the ancient Passover. The sacrifice was a lamb. Jesus is also thus denominated. "Behold," said the illustrious Baptist, "the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world." Indeed, Isaiah had thus prophesied of him, more than seven hundred years before his advent, when he had said, "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter." And Peter, too, beautifully remindeth us that we are redeemed with the "precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." In heaven, too, Jesus is represented as a "lamb standing before the Throne, and receiving the homage and adoration of the countless spirits of the redeemed." No animal could so *fitly* have typified Jesus as the *lamb*. Jesus had all the innocence, and meekness, and patience, which are supposed to be exhibited by the lamb. But the Paschal Lamb was to be a male, of a year old, thus denoting the excellency and dignity of Jesus. Jesus was offered up as our sacrifice in all the maturity and vigour of manhood. The lamb, moreover, was to be *without blemish*. Jesus was truly and absolutely spotless: his person was the true tabernacle, filled with all the holiness and glory of the Godhead: he had not one sinful

infirmity; he had not one mark of moral weakness; but was pure, and holy, and harmless, and separate from sinners. The lamb was to be *separated* from the flock, and to be kept alive *four days* after its separation. Christ was separated and set apart to his mediatorial work *four thousand years* before his death, and a thousand years with the Lord is as one day. During this period, prophecies were uttered, promises announced, and sacrifices slain, all pointing to the same great *propitiation*, whom God had appointed, and would send forth for the redemption of the world. Finally, the Paschal Lamb was to be *slain*. So Jesus came expressly to give his life a ransom for man: he came that, by the shedding of his blood, he might redeem us unto God. And, as the lamb was to be slain in the evening and before the whole assembly, so Jesus was publicly put to death upon the summit of Calvary, in the evening of the day as well as in the evening of the world. Contemplating Christ as the Lamb slain for us, should fill our souls with wonder, love, and praise.

“ O, Love divine ! what hast thou done ?

The Lamb of God hath died for me !

The Father's well-beloved Son

Bore all my sins upon the tree —

The Lamb of God for me hath died :

My Lord, my Love, is crucified.”

Aug. 21.

CHRIST OUR PASSOVER.

PART III. — 1 Cor. v. 7.

AFTER the Paschal Lamb was slain, it was to be roasted with fire; and, in effecting this, it was fixed upon a transverse instrument, which was a very striking representation of the cross, on which the Lamb of God offered himself as a sacrifice for sin. And the fire itself seems to have been designed to denote the intensity of those agonies which Jesus was called upon to endure on our behalf. Yes, it behoved the fire of Divine Justice to descend and consume this sacrifice, that our redemption might be efficiently and eternally accomplished. Of the Paschal Lamb not a *bone* was to be *broken*. How very wonderfully this was realized in Christ. The legs of the two malefactors who were crucified with our Lord were broken, but not a bone of Jesus, our true Paschal Lamb, was injured. Again, the *flesh* of the Paschal Lamb was to be *eaten*. So Jesus came, that we might eat his flesh and drink his blood, and thus partake of everlasting life. On him the soul is to feed; he is the true staff of the soul's existence, -- the only bread of life, which hath come down from heaven. The Paschal Lamb was to be eaten by *Israelites only*, with *unleavened* bread and with *bitter* herbs. Christ is available to believers only.

We cannot receive him but by faith, and we cannot enjoy him unless our souls are sincere before him, and our hearts are delivered from the leaven of deceit and hypocrisy. In receiving Christ, too, there will be the manifestation of genuine contrition for sin—the bitter herbs of that godly sorrow which worketh repentance unto life. The *blood* of the Paschal Lamb was to be sprinkled on the door-posts of their dwellings. So the blood of Jesus must cleanse us from an evil conscience, by being sprinkled upon our hearts; and thus only are we sanctified to God, and made kings and priests, unto God and the Lamb. The happy result was, that all such were preserved from the angel of destruction, and participated in the deliverance which God had provided for his people. And all who thus come to the experimental application of the blood of Jesus are delivered from present condemnation, have peace with God, and shall finally obtain everlasting life.

“Then let us sit beneath his cross,
And gladly catch the healing stream,
All things for him account but loss,
And give up all our hearts to him :
Of nothing speak or think beside,
My Lord, my Love, is crucified.”

Aug. 22.

JESUS THE HIGHEST.

And thou, child, shalt be called the Prophet of the Highest. — Luke i. 76.

It is obvious to the candid reader of the divine testimony, that in all things Christ has the pre-eminence. The titles given to him were never applied to any creature, however dignified or exalted. Of John the harbinger of Christ it is said, "And thou shalt be called the Prophet of the HIGHEST." Jesus is then truly the HIGHEST: above him there is none. This will apply first to his *essential nature*. He possesses the very nature of the Godhead; in him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. He is in the Father, and the Father is in him, and all that constitutes the essentiality of Deity, is truly, eternally, and properly his. He thought it not robbery to be, "equal with God." He is the Highest, as he is invested with all the *incommunicable attributes* of Deity. Eternity, omniscience, omnipresence, Almighty-power, and absolute unchangeableness, are all repeatedly ascribed to him: and to a mere creature, they are never applied. The loftiest spirit that burns before the throne of the Eternal would shrink from the ascription of one of them. Then Jesus is also the Highest as it respects his *illustrious works*. Creation, in all

its extent, as it includes earth and heaven, men and angels was the result of his Divine operations. Without him was not any thing made that was made. (John i. 3.—Col. i. 16.) Providence and universal dominion belong to him: all events he controuls, and over all worlds he rules, for he is Lord of all. Redemption emanated in the depths of his unsearchable wisdom, flowed from the ocean of his boundless love and mercy, and was effected by the making bare of his Almighty arm.

Aug. 23.

CHRIST THE HIGHEST.

PART II.—*Luke i. 76.*

JESUS is not only the Highest in his essential nature, attributes, and illustrious works, but he is exalted to the HIGHEST THRONE. He is highly exalted above all principalities and powers, even to the right hand of the Majesty on high. Jesus also receives the *highest honours*. Hence, the Father addressing him, saith, “Thy throne O God is for ever and ever,” and again, he saith, “Let all the angels of God worship him.” And John beheld “Thousands of thousands,” and heard them saying, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and

honour, and glory, and blessing, for ever and ever." (Rev. v. 12.)

"Him while the first Archangel sings,
He hides his face beneath his wings,
And ranks of shining hosts around
Fall worshipping, and spread the ground."

What a glorious being is the Redeemer! What claims has he justly upon all those who profess to be his disciples. As the Highest and most glorious and best of beings, he ought to have the highest *affections* of our souls. Our love to him ought to be of the superlative degree. We ought to love him with unbounded intensity and delight. He should ever be held in our affections, as the fairest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely. Then as the Highest, he justly claims the highest homage of *praise* and *worship*. We must honor him in all religious acts, even as we honour the Father. To him our highest strains of song, must constantly ascend,—

"Let every creature, every tribe,
On this terrestrial ball,
To him all Majesty ascribe,
And crown him Lord of all."

Then as the Highest, he ought to possess our cheerful, unreserved, and constant obedience. He is our rightful Lord,—to him we are in all things to be subject: and the genuineness of our profes-

sion of love and praise, must be evidenced by a holy life of subjection to his authority and laws. When he speaks, let all the earth keep silence before him; when he commands, let all his creatures reverently obey him.

Aug. 24.

CHRIST CALLING MATTHEW.

And he said unto him, Follow me. — Matt. ix. 9.

MATTHEW was a gatherer of those taxes which the Roman government had laid upon goods, landed on the shores of Galilee, and he was busily employed in his profession, when Christ passed by, and said unto him, "Follow me," when immediately he arose and followed him. How very simple and plain was Christ's call to Matthew. We find no statement of a learned description, no powerful or eloquent harangue, but Christ just speaks to him, and says, "follow me." Observe too, how very direct was Christ's call, — he said, "follow me," he did not suggest a series of topics for his examination, he did not place before him certain propositions for his future consideration, but he gave him a call, imperative and direct, and "it was, follow me." Now this call, was the same as if he had said, become my disciple, assume a profession of my religion, abandon all thy pursuits,

and be found among those, who receive my instructions, and walk in my steps. And this is what Christ addresses in the gospel to all men. To be a christian is to follow Jesus: to receive the record which hath been given of him, and cordially to accept of it as the message of salvation, — to obey his holy commands, to imitate his blessed example, and to cultivate a spirit like that which he manifested on all occasions. A spirit of devotion towards God, and of universal and ardent benevolence toward men. And Matthew obeyed the call without delay, without hesitation, or carnal reasoning, he left the gathering of taxes to others, and for ever, and became a sincere and devoted servant, and apostle of Jesus Christ. What a striking instance of willing and ready obedience: how deserving of our imitation. When Jesus speaks, it is our duty and interest, with all our souls at once to obey him.

Aug. 25.

CHRIST'S ATTACHMENT TO THE FAMILY OF BETHANY.

Now Jesus loved Martha, and her Sister, and Lazarus.

— *John. xi. 4.*

THE love of Jesus extended to the whole world, his benevolent arms encircled every child of man. He came expressly that the world through him

might be saved. Yet Jesus had his especial attachments. He could not behold that which was holy and lovely, without fixing upon it his affectionate and complacent regards. However much he might love the sinner, yet he could not behold his guilt and iniquity, but with utter hatred and abhorrence. Among those who seem to have engaged Christ's peculiar regards, we may consider among the chiefest, the family at Bethany. This family consisted of three individuals — the devout Mary, the kind and anxious Martha, and the affectionate brother, Lazarus. It is probable that Jesus often visited them, partook of their kind hospitality, and in return blessed them with the bread of everlasting life. It will be remembered that on one occasion the sister Martha seems to have been so anxious to meet the Saviour's wants, as almost to have forgotten how necessary it is, to be pre-eminently solicitous about the care of the soul, the one thing needful, the part which shall never be taken from us. While Jesus gently admonished Martha, on that occasion, he commended the intensity which Mary had displayed, and has left us an important and useful lesson, that we should prefer the soul to the body, and the word of Christ's own mouth, above all the enjoyments of earth and time. Who does not almost envy this beloved family? How interesting, how dignifying, is the distinction handed down to us in the inspired page, that "Jesus loved Martha, and Mary

and Lazarus." Be it observed too, that Martha, is placed first, her error indeed could not be very great, in being so deeply solicitous, to be the ministering angel to the wants of her beloved Lord. But Jesus loved all of them,—as a family his smile and blessing was upon them,—of his favour they largely partook, and in his all-gracious compassion, they had a deep and lasting place. O happy family where Jesus pays his heavenly visits ! And is not this the privilege of all those where an altar is erected to his glory, and where his name is feared, loved, and praised ? A Christless family is like a house on the verge of the burning volcano, and is liable to be overwhelmed with the fiery lava of the Divine displeasure.

Aug. 26.

CHRIST'S BEREAVED FRIENDS.

Lazarus is dead.—John xi. 14,

DURING the interval of Christ's visits to the beloved family at Bethany, Lazarus fell sick. We do not wonder that the affectionate sisters should at once therefore send to Jesus, the divine physician, and their beloved Lord, to make known the circumstance, and to seek his healing aid. The message they forwarded was precisely of that kind, which might be expected from the pious, and amiable sisters of Bethany. "Behold he whom

thou lovest is sick." How happy it was that they knew that their brother was the object of Christ's complacent regards. And what a powerful plea it would be with Christ, to attend to their urgent request, when one whom he so much loved was sick. The great advantage of true and genuine friendship, is to obtain sympathy in the hour of trouble and distress. Christ is a friend indeed, who sticketh closer than a brother. In this instance however did Jesus delay his visit. The sickness of Lazarus grew worse and worse, until he became the subject of death, and the house at Bethany became the scene of sorrow and mourning. How disappointed must the sisters have felt at Christ's delay: how they must have counted the moments, and watched every instant for the approach of Jesus! But Jesus knew what was best: though absent from Bethany, his omniscient eye beheld the whole scene. And though the course he adopted might for a short period appear strange and mysterious, yet soon his gracious design was manifested, and the scene of grief and sadness at Bethany, was exchanged for happiness and joy. Believers should not view their losses and sorrows, and bereavements in life, as tokens of the Divine disregard, so far from this, they are often indispensibly necessary to our safety and well-being,—

“ Ev'n crosses from his gracious hands,
Are blessings in disguise. ”

Yes, the Saviour's love changes not, he may vary our dispensations, now we may have prosperity, and then adversity: now we may be overjoyed with comforts, and then be, as though the Lord had forgotten to be gracious, yet assuredly the Lord will not, he cannot be indifferent to the interests of his children: at eventide it shall be light, and in the hour when all seems to be gloomy and hopeless, he will arise upon us, as the Sun of righteousness with healing in his wings.

“ Blind unbelief is sure to err
And scan his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain.”

Aug. 27.

CHRIST WEEPING AT THE TOMB OF LAZARUS.

Jesus wept. — John xi. 35.

THE sisters at Bethany, had been called upon to witness the decease of their beloved brother, and had consigned him to the sepulchre, expecting no more to see him till the resurrection at the last day. But behold Jesus now directs his steps towards their habitation, and Martha hastens forth to meet her Lord. Then said she unto him “Lord, if thou hadst been here, our brother had not died.” It

almost seems as if she reflected on Christ's wisdom and kindness in not being with them earlier to save her brother. At any rate she greatly honored Jesus, for she not only acknowledged his divine power to have prevented death, but also said, "But I know that even now whatsoever thou asketh of God, God will give thee." Jesus then assured her that her brother should rise again, and after an affecting intercourse with the two holy-minded sisters of Bethany, he approaches the grave of Lazarus, and while standing at the tomb, "Jesus wept." Did he not thus sympathise with the afflicted sisters, weeping with them that weep, thus bearing a part of their burden and sorrow, and fulfilling his own royal law of love? did he not also, in the grave of Lazarus behold the sad effects of sin upon our race? He beheld that humanity, which was once clothed in beauty, arrayed in dignity, and blooming with immortality, prostrated, depraved, in a condition of the greatest humiliation, and all effected by the ravages of sin. His heart had been set upon man in creation, when he magnified him and made him but a little lower than the angels. But now he beheld the human temple desolated and in ruins: he saw him the victim of corruption and the conquered vassal of the King of terrors. Jesus never would have shed tears, but for human misery and woe. In himself he had the fountain of perfect happiness and unsullied joys. But for this end was he born and for this did he live and

die, that he might be the companion, the friend, and the Saviour of dying men. In this Jesus hath sanctified the tears of afflicted and bereaved friends. But let us take care, that we sorrow not as those without hope. Be assured, your friends will arise again, and the bonds severed by death, shall be re-united in that blessed world,—

“Where sickness, sorrow, pain and death,
Are felt, and fear'd no more.”

Aug. 28.

CHRIST TYPIFIED BY THE BRAZEN SERPENT.

As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the son of man be lifted up.—John iii. 14.

HERE Jesus directs us for a typical illustration of his saving powers, to an event connected with the Israelites in the wilderness. In consequence of their murmuring against God, he sent fiery serpents among them, the bite of which, was productive of an awfully dreadful and fatal disease. On the confession of the people, and through the intercession of Moses, God graciously provided a remedy. He ordered a serpent of brass to be elevated upon a pole in the midst of the dying camp, and whosoever looked at the brazen serpent were immediately

healed. Now human nature has been rendered diseased, and miserable, and dying, by the baneful influence of that old serpent, the devil. Through his deadly wiles, our first parents became corrupted, and all their posterity are affected with the disease. Like that of the stung Israelites, this moral malady is connected with pain and anguish, and is also rapid in its direful progress, and fatal in its termination. For this dreadful moral malady no human remedy has ever been discovered. Philosophy has exhausted all her resources, legislation has exerted all its power, and education has given her invaluable aid, but all in vain. And the experience of near six thousand years has clearly proved, that there is no help in this matter, from the wisdom or power of man. The world by wisdom knew not God, much less could it ever discover his mind concerning the present and eternal destinies of his sinful and erring creatures. Our condition is clearly developed in his blessed word: there our sinfulness, and helpless state is made fully manifest. How necessary that we should clearly know our real condition before God. A knowledge of our disease is indispensably necessary, and must precede our deliverance from it.

Aug. 29.

CHRIST TYPIFIED BY THE BRAZEN SERPENT.

PART II.—*John* iii. 14.

HAVING glanced at the resemblance between the disease of the Israelites and that of sin, let us now direct our attention to the remedies provided. Both the remedies were *provided* and *appointed* by *God*. The Lord commanded Moses to prepare the serpent of brass, human ingenuity never could have thought of such a remedy. Our redemption by Jesus Christ was the result of Divine wisdom: God devised our recovery in this way. His profound and infinite knowledge was only adequate to this difficult and mysterious achievement. Here is the wisdom of God in a mystery. While the wisdom of God planned both remedies, it will be seen that both were the result of disinterested goodness. No other motive could actuate God in reference to the Israelites than that of pure compassion, so in reference to human redemption, it was because God loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son for its redemption. In both remedies, we see the communications of Divine power. The serpent of brass, was the medium of communicating the healing power to the people. In Christ God hath put forth the exceeding greatness of his power, in delivering our world from the

effects of sin, and the vassalage of the devil. Christ Jesus, in his mediatorial offices and work is emphatically the power of God. It will be observed, also, that both remedies resembled the agents by which the diseases were inflicted. A serpent inflicted the deadly bite, and a brazen serpent was the antidote provided. So by the first Adam's sin, mankind became morally diseased, and by Christ, as our second Adam, in that very nature, we have the grand remedy for that disease. As by man came sin, and condemnation, and death, so by man also came obedience, satisfaction, and eternal life. By the first Adam's transgression, we became ignorant, depraved, wretched, and perishing: by the second Adam's righteousness and merits, we obtain knowledge, holiness, peace, and unerring felicity. Both the *remedies* were to be *elevated*,—the serpent of brass, upon a pole, and Jesus upon the cross, and by the publication of his gospel. In the one case, the remedy was exhibited before the whole camp of Israel, and by the other, Jesus is to be held up to the unnumbered myriads of the human race. Well might the Apostle when experimentally conscious of the efficacy of the gospel remedy, exclaim, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Aug. 30.

CHRIST TYPIFIED BY THE BRAZEN SERPENT.

PART III. — *John* iii. 14.

HAVING considered the diseases and the remedies for them as exhibited in the type and antetype, let us now notice how these remedies become effectual to the removal of the maladies. In the case of the uplifted serpent, the bitten Israelites had merely to look at it. A single glance at the brazen serpent counteracted the fatal poison, and rescued the victim from death. Now this looking is analogous to that of believing by which we become savingly interested in Christ's merits and salvation. In both cases there is an object exhibited; and to this object the attention of the afflicted was directed. The looking was by God's command, and it had his gracious promise annexed to it, that it should save the dying Israelite. God in like manner calls upon sinners to behold the Lamb, which taketh away the sins of the world. And he assures us that if we fix upon him the eye of *faith — if we cordially look to him, as the only appointed and all-sufficient Saviour, — that we shall not perish, out have everlasting life. How easy the means in both cases! No works, no painful observances; but look and be healed — believe and be saved. How gratuitous the mode of recovery! No pur-

chasing merit demanded. In both cases the cure is without money and without price. How *free*, *unrestricted*, and *general* were the remedies. The serpent was exhibited to the whole camp — Jesus is offered to the whole world. Unfailingly *efficacious* were both remedies. Every Israelite, however deep his bite, however near to death, if he looked was healed — healed instantaneously, healed wholly. So every sinner, in every age and country, however vile, who has believed in Jesus, has proved him able to save both from the guilt and power of sin here, and its dreadful consequences in the world to come.

“ As when the hebrew Prophet rais’d
 The brazen serpent high,
 The wounded look’d and straight were cur’d;—
 The people ceas’d to die.
 So from the Saviour on the cross,
 A healing virtue flows,
 Who looks to him with lively faith,
 Is sav’d from endless woes.”

Aug. 31.

CHRIST AT JACOB’S WELL.

Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well.—John iii. 14.

How indefatigable was Jesus in carrying on his great mission, in effecting his momentous work. He did not consult his own comfort or ease, but

day after day, he travelled on foot from place to place, glorifying his Father, and blessing the bodies and souls of men. Being fatigued, and weary, and thirsty, on one of these occasions, he came to Jacob's well, and sat thereon. While there, a Samaritan woman came for water; Jesus therefore sought that she would give him to drink. The request surprised the woman, inasmuch as Jews manifested the greatest possible hostility towards Samaritans, and refused all intercourse with them. Jesus therefore seized the occasion, and spoke to the woman of the waters of life, assuring her, if she had but known the gift of God, and who it was that had asked water of her, that she would have been a petitioner in turn, and that he would freely have imparted to her of the water of life. Jesus continued to expatiate on the preciousness of this water, and said, "whoever drank of it should never thirst, but that it should be in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life." She then exclaimed "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw." Thus it was obvious that she understood not Christ, nor the water of which he spake. Jesus then began to converse with the heart of this woman, making all its dark imagery to pass before her eyes. He tells her to call her husband, when it is elicited, that she was living in a state of unhallowed intercourse with one, who was not husband to her. He then discourses to her respecting acceptable wor-

ship, and in reference to the dispute, whether God ought to be worshipped at Jerusalem, or on the mountain of Samaria, he instructs her that the time had now come, when the Father might be worshipped anywhere, if worshipped in spirit and in truth. How interesting and cheering this truth, that God is not confined to temples made with hands, but that in the retirement of the closet, at the family altar, in the sick chamber, or even in the solitary desert, or on the wide expanse of the ocean's waters, God will be present to hear, assist, and bless, if we worship him in spirit and in truth.

Sept. 1.

CHRIST AND THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA.

The woman then left her water-pot, and went her way into the city.—John iv. 28.

CHRIST having instructed her as to the nature of spiritual worship, she then expresses her faith in the long expected Messiah, and that when he came he would tell them all things. Jesus then declared unto her, that he was that Messiah; immediately she left her waterpot, that with greater haste she might announce the glad tidings to her neighbours and friends. "Come," she said, "see a man who told me all things that ever I did, is not this the Christ?" Then they went out of the city and

came to Jesus. And what was the sequel? why many of them believed on Jesus, and besought him to tarry with them, and he abode there two days. How very interesting and instructive is the whole narrative. Have we become partakers of the living waters, which Christ communicates to thirsty, dying souls? Do we indeed, and of a truth believe in him? And have we said to Jesus, abide with us; and is he our chief beloved guest, formed in our hearts the hope of glory? The subject has been beautifully paraphrased, and applied to our own country, and which cannot fail to interest the pious reader.

“ At Jacob’s well a stranger sought.
His drooping frame to cheer :
Samaria’s daughter little thought
That Jacob’s God was near.

This had she known, her fainting mind
For richer draughts had sigh’d,
Nor had Messiah, ever kind,
Those richer draughts deny’d.

This ancient well, no glass so true,
Britannia’s image shews,
Now Jesus travels Britain through,
But who the stranger knows ?

Yet Britain must the stranger know,
Or soon her loss deplore ,
Behold the living waters flow!
Come drink, and thirst no more.”

*Sept. 2.*CHRIST OFFERING THE WATERS OF
SALVATION.

*If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. —
John vii. 37.*

ON the last day of the feast of tabernacles, it was common for the worshippers to fetch water from the pool of Siloam, part of which they drank with great joy, while the rest was poured out on the altar, in remembrance of the waters supplied to their fathers from the rock in the wilderness. Jesus therefore availed himself of this occasion, and addressed the people, and said, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." Now our attention is called to several interesting particulars. The *speaker* on this occasion is Jesus. "Jesus stood up and cried." And it was for this very end that he visited our perishing world, that he might confer upon its inhabitants everlasting life. Never was so dignified a speaker heard. Never did any speaker possess the authority, the power, or the goodness of Jesus. His resources are infinite, and they are all resources of mercy and grace. Of him it is said, that "He is full of grace and truth." And again it is said, that in him "all fulness dwells." Then notice the *commodity* he offers. It is *living waters*. Not the natural fluid so called, but spiritual drink, that which is adapted to the mind, that which satisfies the thirsty soul. The figure obviously refers to the

influence of the Spirit, for it is added, "this he spake of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive." Now as water cools and refreshes, and is essential to natural life, so the Holy Spirit allays the irritation of the mind, and fills the soul with all the refreshing blessings of peace, and is essential to spiritual existence and happiness. Have we received the Holy Spirit into our hearts? Have we experienced the establishment of that kingdom within us, which is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost? "For if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

Sept. 3.

CHRIST OFFERING THE WATERS OF SALVATION.

PART II. — *John vii. 37.*

LET us now glance at the *characters* to whom Christ's invitation was addressed. If any man *thirst*, let him come to me and drink. None but those who thirst will appreciate the living waters. None else could possibly enjoy them. To all else they would be offered in vain. But what is this thirsting? It includes obviously a sense of need, a painful state of mind, resembling that which the body feels when scorched by heat. It also includes eager and intense desire. Hence says the Psalmist

“As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.” Now it is not until we feel our extreme need, and until an ardent desire is enkindled, that we shall feel our interest in the gracious invitations of the gospel. Then observe the *freeness* and *gratuitousness* of the invitation itself. It is to any one that thirsts, whoever he may be, whatever might have been his state and condition: so that none are excluded but those who, knowing not the value of the boon offered, exclude themselves. And all the terms proposed by Christ to such is merely this, that they *come* to Christ. “If any man thirst let him come to me.” And this coming is simply a willingness of mind to receive cordially the blessings which he waits to confer. It excludes every thing like merit, or price, or self-qualification. The waters have been provided. They flow freely before us; and we have only just to approach, to obey the gracious mandate, and apply them to our thirsty lips. And we may drink freely and abundantly. There is no restriction whatever, we may drink copious draughts, and satisfy all the desires of our thirsty souls. By the sweetness and vitality of these streams, and by the freeness of the invitation given, let us be constrained to come to Christ, and to take of the waters of life freely.

“Ho! ye that pant for living streams,
And pine away, and die,

Here you may quench your raging thirst,
With streams that never dry.
These streams the whole creation reach,
So plenteous is the store,
Enough for all, enough for each,
Enough for evermore."

Sept. 4.

CHRIST THE CONSOLATION OF ISRAEL.

Consolation of Israel.—Luke ii. 25.

IN this world of trouble and affliction, man stands in frequent need of consolation. His condition as a fallen guilty being, renders him the subject of conscious distress, anxiety, and fear. And the intense distresses of a guilty heart, can only be removed by a saving acquaintance with the Lord Jesus Christ. We must bear our oppressive yoke of vassalage, and be pressed beneath our burden of sin, until we come to Jesus, who invites us to take his yoke which is easy, and his burden which is light. With what eagerness thousands of contrite sinners have laid hold upon Jesus, in the day of spiritual awakening and alarm! When all has been tempestuous around them, when the dread sentence, like the sable cloud has hovered over them, and when fear has seized them, as an armed man, then to Christ have they repaired, and in him

they have found abundant consolation. And who can tell how sweet, and how precious that consolation has been? Never did the thirsty traveller rejoice so much, when he had found the living stream in the desert, never did the manslayer enter more joyfully into the city of refuge, never did the condemned malefactor receive with greater happiness the pardon of his sovereign, at the last hour, than the guilty trembling sinner has received Jesus, as the consolation of his heart. Now is the blackness of Sinai, exchanged for the glory of Zion. Now night is exterminated, and a day of celestial light hath visited the mind. Now is the sterility of winter ended, spring, verdant spring has arrived, and the time of the singing of birds has come. Old things have passed away, and all things have become new. The mind has lost its wretchedness, and the spirit its bitterness, and the consolation of Israel dwells and reigns in the heart. How desirable it is, that poor miserable sinners should savingly enjoy the knowledge of the consolation of Israel!

Sept. 5.

CHRIST THE CONSOLATION OF ISRAEL.

PART II. — *Luke ii. 27.*

As Christ is the consolation of the enquiring

penitent sinner, so also, is he the consolation of his believing people. When suffering poverty, reproach, and persecution for his sake, he sympathizes with them, supports them, and makes his grace all-sufficient for them. To whom can they repair in the dark and cloudy day but Jesus? Jesus, who is the only refuge from the tempest, and the only covert from the storm. When they are suffering from the temptations of the wicked one, Jesus is their only consolation. He teaches their hands to fight, he invigorates for the conflict, and they are more than conquerors through him that loved them. When drawing near to the valley of death, all their comfort is derived from Jesus. Living, they live to the Lord, and when they die, they die to the Lord, so that living or dying they are the Lord's. Besides, his presence cheers them in death, with Stephen, they behold by the eyes of faith, their exalted Lord and Saviour, and gladly do they yield their falling tabernacles, that they may be for ever with Jesus, which is far better. On Christ's blood, they rest for acceptance with the Father, on the pre-valency of his intercession, they hope for the enjoyment of all heavenly and eternal good; and seeing that Jesus who was dead is alive again; they lay down their bodies in the dust, in sure and certain hope of a resurrection unto eternal life. O yes, Christ is the consolation of all the saints! He is their morning star, and rising sun,—he is the fountain of all their enjoyment and the source of

all their bliss, — he is their chief good, their Alpha and Omega, their all and in all. And the consolation they enjoy in the possession of Christ, is real, not delusive; it is full and free, not limited; it is abiding, not fleeting and transient; it is eternal, not bounded by human life, or restricted to the present world. Christ is the consolation of all his people, either on earth or in heaven.

Sept. 6.

JESUS A VINE.

I am the true vine. — John. xv. 1.

THE principal design of this parabolical address, was to shew the entire dependence of believers for all things on Christ. That as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, so neither can believers be happy, or holy, or useful, but as they are connected with Christ, and influenced by his grace. For without him they can do nothing. At present let us consider the figure which Christ employs in reference to himself, “I am the true vine.” Jesus may be likened to a vine, on account of his humble and lowly appearance. The vine is exceeded in height by the cedar, in strength by the oak, and in beauty by the palm tree. So Jesus appeared in a humiliating form. He did not come in celestial splendour, but in human weakness, the child of poverty, the man of sorrows and acquainted with

grief. But the vine is exceedingly fruitful. It is said, that one planted by the Empress Levina, yielded 108 gallons in one single year. Jesus is the richest source of all grace. In him all fulness dwells. He bears all kinds of spiritual fruits, adapted to the spiritual exigences of the soul of man. All our need is supplied out of the riches of the divine munificence, through Christ Jesus. The produce of the vine is sweet and refreshing. It is said to cheer the heart of man. Hence we are required to give it to such as are of a heavy heart, it is one of the chief luxuries of a kind and benignant providence. Jesus is the fountain of peace and spiritual happiness. He heals the wounded conscience. He enlivens the soul, cheers the mind and bestows joy unspeakable and full of glory. The fruit of Jesus, the true vine, is spiritual, celestial, abundant, and eternal. Are we personally connected with him? Are we vital branches continually receiving his precious communications? our felicity is connected with abiding in him, and it must be our constant aim and desire to bear much fruit.

Sept. 7.

JESUS THE BISHOP OF SOULS.

Bishop of your souls.—1 Pet. ii. 25.

THE terms Bishop, overseer, and pastor, obviously signify the same office. To be a bishop therefore, is to have the oversight of the church, to be employed in governing, watching over, instructing, and feeding the flock of God. This office God has committed to faithful men, whom he calls, qualifies, and sends forth into his kingdom. The Head of these, the Great Bishop, is the Lord Jesus Christ. From him they derive all their authority, power, and ability to execute their office. They labour for him; he employs them — supports them — blesses them; to him they must give an account, “And when the chief shepherd shall appear, they shall receive a crown of glory, that fadeth not away.” In the church there are teachers, but Jesus is the great teacher — there are rulers, but Jesus is the head over all — there are bishops, but Jesus is truly and preeminently the Bishop of souls. As such, he provides all spiritual supplies for his church. He leads his flock into green pastures, and by the side of still waters. He gives them all needful grace — blesses them with a supply of all good things, out of the exhaustless fulness of his grace. He breaks unto them the bread of everlasting life. And how well qualified he is, to make this provision! All

resources are his. Yea, they are all within himself. He is possessed of boundless fulness; he can therefore bestow grace upon grace, so that his disciples cannot possibly want;

“And his love is as great as his power,
And neither knows measure nor end.”

He constantly desires the well being of his people, they are never forgotten for a single instant. He anticipates all their desires, and often before they call, he prevents them by communications of his love and grace. His flock must be prosperous and happy. “Happy is the people that is in such a case, yea happy is that people whose God is the Lord.”

Sept. 8.

JESUS THE BISHOP OF SOULS.

PART II.—1 *Pet.* ii. 25.

As the Bishop of souls, he not only supplies their wants, but he also superintends and directs all the affairs of his church. “He is the Head of the body the church.” He appoints all its ordinances—directs all its movements—gives all its laws and regulations—institutes all its officers—and manages all its concerns. He confers talents, and bestows gifts and graces, to every one of its members, as “he will.” He is the only Lord of conscience, and the only ruler of his church. As the Bishop

of souls, he constantly watches to promote its interests and welfare. His eyes are constantly upon it; he keeps it by day and by night, yea he keeps it every moment. He is the shield and abiding defence of his saints; he holds them all in his hand; he protects them as the apple of his eye, they cannot perish, neither can any pluck them out of his hands.

“Saviour of souls! he knows to prize,
What he hath bought so dear.”

As Bishop of souls, he ever dwells in the midst of his church; his presence is pledged. And the promise he has ever verified, for,

“He makes his temples his abode,
His most delightful seat.”

Are we among those happy souls, who can claim Jesus as their Shepherd, their Bishop, their All in all? Are we the recipients of his gracious supplies? Are we the objects of his care and rule? Do we rejoice in his presence, and is it our meat and drink to honour him, and to do all his righteous will and pleasure? Blessed are they who dwell in his house for they will be still praising him.

O may we in his pastures feed—
The objects of his love;
Until he leads our happy souls,
To fairer scenes above.

Sept. 9.

JESUS THE LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH.

The Lion of the tribe of Judah.—Rev. v. 5.

WHILE the blessed Jesus is compared to the Lamb on account of his meekness, tenderness, and patience, he is also compared to the Lion, on account of his strength, courage, and generosity. These are the traits which render the Lion, the monarch, and noblest of all the beasts of the forest. Yet these but faintly typify the true character of Jesus, the Lion of the tribe of Judah. His *strength* is boundless; he possesses all power both in heaven and on earth. Almightyness is one of his essential attributes. His *courage* is invincible. It is never recorded that he feared, except when the overwhelming floods of anguish and sorrow came over him in Gethsemane's garden, and then he prayed with strong crying and tears, and overcame, and was delivered from that fear. In effecting our redemption, he stood the combatant of all our foes, and he stood alone, he had none who aided him in the mighty conflict. Yes, his name possesses the power of a host,

“Angels and men before him fall,
And devils fear and fly.”

In all the greatness and glory of his majesty and

power, he went forth from conquering to conquer, until he overcame all his foes, and returned with triumph, as the Bozrah conqueror, mighty to save. But with all the power and courage he possesses, he is still eminently distinguished for his *noble generosity*. Hence, while he employed his power to crush the allied enemies of himself and man, yet he manifested the greatest possible goodness and mercy to our fallen guilty race. He might have condemned and destroyed the world, but he came to redeem it, to bless it, and that the world through him might be saved. But to those who obstinately and impenitently reject his overtures of grace, he will indeed be the Lion of destruction, his generosity will be exchanged for displeasure and wrath, and his adversaries will he tear in pieces, and none shall deliver. The subject is therefore fraught with comfort and joy to the penitent believer, but with unspeakable terror to those who remain the victims of disobedience and unbelief.

Sept. 10.

TRANSFIGURATION OF CHRIST.

And was transfigured before them.—

Matt. xxvii. 2.

THE transfiguration was one of the most extraordinary events in the life of Jesus. It was a sort

of cessation from toil and degradation for a time—a kind of bright and luminous interval in the midst of a life of suffering and woe. All the particulars connected with it are worthy of minute attention, since they furnish so much interesting matter for profitable meditation. Who does not rejoice that the blessed Saviour should enjoy one joyous and illustrious scene, while passing through the sorrows and griefs of his career of bitterness and affliction? Let us then take a contemplative survey of all the circumstances interwoven with this glorious and magnificent event. Consider, first, the *witnesses* of Christ's transfiguration: these were, "Peter, James, and John," a sufficient number to testify to what was seen and heard, and yet not too many to disturb the hallowed and sacred scene. Peter was one of Christ's most zealous disciples, and had recently made a noble confession of his messiahship and divinity. He was destined to fill a very high and honourable place in Christ's kingdom, and afterwards was the first to introduce the gospel both amongst the Jews and Gentiles. James was the first apostle who was called to seal the gospel with his blood, and to wear the brilliant wreath of martyrdom. John was Christ's beloved disciple, the youngest of all, and the individual who was to be the refuge and the friend of the heart-pierced mother of the crucified Jesus. It is remarkable that these were the favoured three who were the only witnesses when Christ raised the daughter of

Jarius, and his only attendants when he endured the agony in the garden of Gethsemane. How well did it tend to qualify Peter for his illustrious mission, James for his martyrdom, and John for being so successful an advocate of Christ's divinity and glory.

Sept. 11.

CHRIST'S TRANSFIGURATION.

PART II. — *Luke ii. 27.*

HAVING noticed the witnesses, let us now secondly consider the place of Christ's transfiguration. The place was Mount Tabor. It is very remarkable how God has been pleased to select mountains as the scenes of some of the most important events that have transpired in our world. On Mount Ararat the ark of Noah rested, after having been tossed by the waters for more than six months. On Mount Moriah, Abraham typically offered his son Isaac. On Mount Horeb, God appeared to Moses in the burning bush. On Mount Sinai, God descended when he gave the law. On Mount Pisgah, Moses beheld the promised land, and on Mount Nebo, he expired by the mouth of the Lord. On Mount Ebal, Joshua built an altar to the Lord, and wrote upon stone the law of Moses. On Mount Carmel, the true God of heaven was magnified by Elijah, Baal confounded, and

the false prophets destroyed. In reference to the events of Christ's life, it may be noticed, that on a mountain he preached his memorable sermon. On Mount Calvary he was crucified, and from Mount Olivet he ascended into glory. Mount Tabor was selected as the most appropriate for his transfiguration. No doubt, its elevation, retiredness, and solitude, were highly favourable to the glorious and august scene. The elevated mount seemed also to harmonize with that glorious exaltation which Jesus now experienced over the ordinary circumstances of his life. The season of Christ's transfiguration was night. Often during the night had God appeared to the patriarchs and prophets. Jesus had often spent whole nights in meditation and prayer, and now, during this silent season, as he transfigured, the surrounding darkness rendering his white and glorious appearance more striking and magnificent. What a scene ! The world in darkness, and fast linked in the arms of slumber, and still faster bound by the fetters of guilt : and Jesus, the rejected of that world, conversing with heavenly intelligences, enveloped with light and splendour.

Sept. 12.

CHRIST'S TRANSFIGURATION.

PART III. — *Matt. xvii. 2.*

It is deserving of our particular attention tha.

as Christ "*prayed*, he was transfigured;" and it appears that he had ascended the mountain, with his disciples, to *pray*. All Christ's important engagements were thus hallowed with prayer. Prayer distinguished all the leading steps of his illustrious career. When he was baptized, and received the anointing of the Spirit, and the attestation of the Father, he was praying. When he was tempted by Satan in the desert, he prayed. When he wrought some of his more splendid miracles, he prayed. When his soul was in agony at Gethsemane, he prayed. When crucified, and he was giving up the Ghost, he prayed. When, after standing on Olivet's glorious summit, he took his celestial flight to glory,

"He entered heaven by prayer."

And now, that he is in the holiest place of all, he ever liveth, to make intercession for us. Thus, be it observed, all events and conditions were sanctified by prayer. Ordinances, temptations, miracles, afflictions, persecutions, death, and glory, were thus rendered sacred by the devotional exercise of the Son of God. While he "*prayed*," his transfiguration was effected. And is not this a token of the honour Jehovah designed to confer upon this holy exercise? And ought we not to be influenced by it at all times and in all places, and in every possible variety of condition, to offer up prayer before him, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and

doubting? We cannot be followers of Jesus without prayer. We cannot endure prosperity or bear adversity without prayer. Ordinances will profit nothing without prayer. We shall never be glorified unless we live and die in the exercise of prayer.

Sept. 13.

CHRIST'S TRANSFIGURATION.

PART IV.—*Matt.* xvii. 1-8.

WE have already adverted to the witnesses, the place, the season, and the exercise in which Christ was engaged, when his transfiguration took place. Let us now consider the *transfiguration itself*. The change which passed upon the Saviour, related, I. — to his *person*. His person became luminous, majestic, and glorious. He appeared no longer to dwell in an earthly tabernacle, but to be irradiated with beams of effulgent light and splendour. Most likely he appeared in that glory which he now possesses before the throne of God. That glory which overwhelmed Saul of Tarsus, and which caused John in Patmos, to fall as one dead before him. Then his transfiguration included the *splendour* of his *countenance*. "His face did shine as the sun." It is said of Moses, that when he came from the mount, the people could not look upon his irradiated face. But his glory was but evanescent, commu-

nicated, and the result of converse with Deity. But Christ's glory, like the sun's, was underived, his, was his own essential glory which he had with the Father before the world was. How inconceivably resplendent must that light be, which is to illumine the whole celestial world by its eternal rays! Then Christ's transfiguration also respected his *apparel*. His garments were "white as light," "exceeding white as snow." His garments were not symbolical of war, terror, and destruction, but of holiness, blessedness, and peace. When Daniel beheld him as the Ancient of Days, "his garments were white as snow." When John saw him in his vision, "his head and hair were white as snow." And when he shall judge all nations, he shall appear on a "great white throne," before which, the heavens and earth shall flee away. Such were the effects produced upon Christ by his transfiguration, doubtless a representation of his dignity before he assumed a servant's form, and also of that glory which he should possess through eternal ages, when he had finished the work which had been given him to do. That work he did finish, on that glory he has entered, and all true believers are joint-heirs with him, and if they suffer with him, they shall also be glorified together.

"Him eye to eye we then shall see,
Our face like his shall shine,
O what a glorious company,
When saints and angels join!"

Sept. 14.

CHRIST'S TRANSFIGURATION.

PART V.—*Matt. xvii. 1-8.*

LET us now consider the *attendants* at Christ's transfiguration. There were "Moses and Elias." It might be thought that angels ought rather to have been present to have witnessed the glorious scene. But angels are not so closely connected with Christ as men; he took our nature, not theirs, and while he is the Lord of angels, he is the kinsman and the redeemer of man. The men selected for this august occasion, were among the most distinguished of the servants of God, that ever lived. Moses was one. He had flourished about fifteen hundred years before Christ's appearance; he was the first writer of the sacred scriptures; the deliverer of the Jews; the first lawgiver under God, an illustrious prophet, and eminent type of Jesus, and the founder of that economy which for generations was identified with his name. Now then he appeared to lay down his authority at the feet of Christ, to testify to his Divinity and Messiahship, and to give him homage as the world's long predicted prophet and redeemer. The other attendant was Elias, or Elijah, as Moses stood at the head of the Levitical economy, so he represented the prophetic dispensation. He had been distinguished as one of the holy and zealous servants of the Lord

of hosts, and was not suffered to feel the pains of death, but was removed to heaven in a chariot of fire. In these two distinguished servants, then, we have both the law and the prophets honouring him, "Of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write." And they appeared in concert together, to shew that Christ was the centre, sum, and substance both of the law and the prophets. Now of these illustrious personages, it is said, "they appeared in glory." No doubt they would shine as bright and beautifully as angels. Long had they been the sons of celestial light, long had they been surrounded by the noontide splendour of meridian day, and now in the habiliments of glory, they appear to witness the transfiguration of their blessed Lord. Their appearance obviously contradicts the morbid doctrine of the soul's sleep till the resurrection morn, and clearly teaches us, that the departed spirits of the saints, are in a state of blessed consciousness, and in the possession of distinguished happiness and glory.

Sept. 15.

CHRIST'S TRANSFIGURATION.

PART VI.—*Matt. xvii. 1-8*

MOSES and Elijah not only descended to witness Christ's transfiguration, but also to hold fellowship and converse with him. Hence it is said, that

Moses and Elias were "talking with him." The subject of their conversation is happily revealed to us; for Luke says, they "spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." The word employed in reference to Christ's death, is "decease," which signifies departure, and is supposed to allude to the dismissal of the scape goat, with the sins of the people on its head, into the wilderness for ever. Christ afterwards spake of his death in similar terms, when he said, "I go away," but "If I go away, I will come again, &c." Paul in like manner, looked upon his death as a decease or departure, when he said, "the time of my departure is at hand." Now this decease, Christ was to "accomplish;" now here Christ's death is spoken of as an active, and not a passive act. And this perfectly agrees with the facts of the case. For he "gave" his life, he "laid it down," he "yielded" up his spirit. No man had power to take it from him: he therefore had power to lay it down, and he had power to take it up again. And had not his death been his own free and active act, it could not have been acceptable as a sacrifice for the sins of the world. The decease was to be accomplished at "Jerusalem." Calvary had been appointed as the summit on which the cross was to be erected. Jerusalem was to be the city where the "fountain was to be opened for sin and uncleanness:" here he was to be tried, condemned, and put to death. But, it is said, they "spake" of his decease. Per-

haps, of the necessity of it, to realize types, to fulfil prophecies, and to save the world. Perhaps of its influence, in spoiling the powers of darkness, destroying death, opening the tomb, and extending wide the portals of the heavenly city. Perhaps they spake of the rewards with which it should be followed, in seeing the prolonging of his days, the extension of his kingdom, the boundless travail of his soul, and the joyous acclamations he should receive from redeemed spirits, through the ages of eternity. How all-important to man was the death of Christ! What a theme for reading, for conversation, and for study! No wonder the apostle determined to know nothing else. Christ crucified, though foolishness to the Greeks, and a stumbling-block to the Jews, is to them that believe, both the wisdom and the power of God.

Sept. 16.

PETER'S TRANSPORT AT CHRIST'S TRANSFIGURATION.

Lord, it is good for us to be here.—Matt. xvii. 4.

It must always have been good to be with Jesus. Yet there were times in his career when his disciples must have felt peculiar pleasure, and abounding delight and joy. When he was delivering his heavenly discourses, and when he was work-

ing his splendid yet gracious miracles, must have been among these profitable seasons. None however were more calculated to produce these rapturous effects, than when he was transfigured. Every thing was calculated to make it good to be there. To see two of the most distinguished servants of God, arrayed in garbs of glory,—to hear a conversation between these illustrious glorified souls, and the blessed Jesus, on the subject of the world's redemption,—to be elevated to the summit of Tabor, and to be far from the world's noise, its sneers, its revilings, and persecutions,—to behold the blessed Lord whose form was generally darkened with the bitterness of grief, now joyous, now receiving the homage of departed saints, and enjoying the foretaste of his future glory. It must have been good to be there: it was indeed heaven upon earth. The militant and the triumphant church in deputation, with the Lord of both, transfigured in the midst of them. It is always good to be on the mount of meditation and prayer: to have communion with the saints, and to behold Christ's glory.

“ Our willing souls would stay,
In such a frame as this,
And sit and sing themselves away
To everlasting bliss.
And if our fellowship below,
In Jesus be so sweet,
What heights of rapture shall we know,
When round his throne we meet.”

Sept. 17.

PETER'S PROPOSAL TO BUILD
TABERNACLES FOR MOSES, ELIAS,
AND CHRIST.

Let us make here three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.—Matt. xvii, 4.

PETER'S rapturous state of mind carried him quite away, hence he was anxious to perpetuate the scene. The proposal was the result of happy excitement, but not of wisdom and reflection. His proposal in many respects was worthy of him, and displayed amiable and interesting traits of character. He wished only to build "tabernacles," a sort of booths, not permanent dwellings. He wanted these tabernacles to be on the mount of prayer, not in the crowded unhallowed scenes of the world. He wished the first to be erected for Christ, thus giving Jesus the Saviour, the preference over Moses and Elias. He did not say any thing about himself and brethren, perhaps he was anxious that they should be with Jesus, adoring at his feet. Then he referred the matter to Christ, "Lord if thou wilt," if it seem good in thy sight, if not, thy will be done. Yet the proposal displayed the weakness of the Apostle. Luke says, "Not knowing what

he said." Peter erred, in that he wanted heaven here, forgetting that this world is the field of warfare, the race course, the ocean, the place of triumph, the goal ;—the heaven is above. Peter lost sight of his brethren below, the other disciples who had not been invited to the scene, and therefore his plan was limited and selfish. Peter too forgot that it was unreasonable to wish to detain Moses and Elias, on a barren mountain, after they had become the citizens of the heavenly Zion. Besides three tabernacles at any rate were unnecessary, Moses and Elias, with all the redeemed company, not only wished to have communion with each other but especially to dwell with Jesus, and worship before him. He also forgot the conversation which related to Christ's decease at Jerusalem. An ignorant world had to be instructed, and the eternal interests of men, secured by his death upon the cross. It behoved therefore that the convocation, glorious as it was, must be dissolved: the splendour of the scene begins already to depart, the inexpressible extacy subsides. Jesus touches the Apostles, who had been overwhelmed with the glory they had beheld, and the well-known voice addresses them, "Arise, and be not afraid." The celestial visitants have departed, the cloud of the Divine presence and glory is removed, and now they leave the mountain, to perform the work which God had given them to do. Let us learn, however joyous may be the seasons which we may

possess here, that they must be transitory, permanent bliss is enjoyed only in heaven, and a voice is constantly addressing us, "Arise and depart ye, for this is not your rest," but there remaineth an eternal sabbath for the people of God.

Sept. 18.

JESUS OUR HOPE.

The Lord Jesus Christ, who is our hope.—1 Tim. i. 1.

HOPE is a most joyous sensation of mind arising from the expectation of future good. Now God has been pleased to reveal and promise to all believers, the possession of future eternal good, even the enjoyment of his favour and presence for ever. This is what is comprehended in the term salvation. Now Jesus is essentially the soul and spring of this hope, so much so, that with propriety he may be styled our hope itself. He is styled the "Hope of Israel," and the "Hope of his people," the Apostle describes him as dwelling in us, the "Hope of glory." His merits are the ground of our hope. Had he not been obedient, magnified the law and died for our sins, Divine mercy would not have been communicated, so that we should have been the subjects of everlasting despair. But by his death, he hath redeemed us to God, and through him we have reconciliation and acceptance

with God. His resurrection is the pledge of our hope. By his death we are redeemed, and by his resurrection, we have a demonstrative proof of his divinity, and hence, of the acceptableness of the offering of himself. Hence all our confidence as to his virtue and merits, is firmly established and unmovably fixed by his resurrection from the dead. Hence we are said to be "Begotten again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead." His gospel is the warrant of hope. Here we have the rich blessing of his grace and love revealed to us: here they are published, and freely offered: here the word and truth of God are pledged for their ratification. The spirit of Christ is the warrant of our hope. By the enjoyment of Christ's spirit, we possess the beginning, the first fruits of the blessings promised. And the spirit is given us as an earnest that the full inheritance shall finally be ours. The enjoyment of Christ is the great object of hope: to be transformed into his likeness, to enjoy his presence, to dwell in his kingdom, and to participate of his glory, is the consummation of blessedness. The possession of Jesus, is the possession of eternal life. He who inherits Christ, inherits all things.

Sept. 19.

CHRIST RAISING LAZARUS.

Lazarus, come forth.—John ii. 43.

WHAT wondrous effects often followed the uttering of a single sentence by the Son of God. What numerous practical exhibitions we have of the “word of his power.” He once addressed the tempest of the Galilean lake, and said, “peace, be still,” and there was an instant calm. At another time, he spake to a legion of devils, which possessed the wretched demoniac, and said, “come out of the man,” and they trembled before him, and came out of the man. To Lepers he had but to say, “be ye clean,” and at once they were cleansed. And now, standing by the grave of Lazarus, who had been dead four days, he exerted the same almighty voice, and said, “Lazarus, come forth,” and immediately he lived, and heard, and came forth. Observe a few things connected with this illustrious miracle. See the *piety* with which it was distinguished: he lifted up his eyes to heaven, adored the Father, and gave him thanks, and blessed him, because he was always heard of him. By prayer and thanksgiving did Jesus hallow the miraculous actions of his life. Then the miracle was distinguished also for *great affection*. Lazarus had been his beloved friend. It was at his grave that the eyes of Jesus were suffused with

tears, until the spectators observed it, and said, "Behold, how he loved him!" Then there was also the *power* and *glory* of this miracle: to give life to the dead—to raise from the grave, after the spirit had been disembodied four days. Jesus had on one occasion given life to the ruler's daughter immediately after death: he had raised the widow's son as they were bearing him to the place of burial. But now, he not only conquers death, but brings Lazarus forth from the habitation of mortality, and thus spoils the grave itself. What power does Jesus possess! What glory belongs to his illustrious name! Who would not fear before him? Well may raptured hosts exclaim, as they worship at his feet, "Blessing, and honour, and power, and glory, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever."

Sept. 20.

THE RESURRECTION OF LAZARUS IMPROVED.

John xi. 38 — 45.

THE resurrection of Lazarus presents us with a striking representation of the restoration of dead sinners to the life and faith of the gospel. In this state of spiritual death are all men involved. Every man is in a prostrated, degraded, and loath-

some condition. "Dead in trespasses and sins," is a sentence applicable to all men. Christ by the power of his almighty word, can raise men from this death, and impart spiritual life to the soul. Hence we read of being "born again, of the incorruptible seed of the word of God." Now it is only by the power of this almighty word that the soul can be quickened, and raised from the grave of pollution and guilt, and come forth to live to him who is truly the resurrection and the life. Reader, have you felt this power—have you heard this voice—and do you now live a life of faith on the Son of God, who loved you and gave himself for you? The resurrection of Lazarus also directs our attention to the resurrection of believers in the morning of the Saviour's second advent into our world. What a glorious morning will that be, when Christ, with glory infinitely brighter than the sun at noonday, shall appear again without a sin offering for the eternal redemption of his people. Then the mighty harvest of his sleeping saints will be gathered in, of whom he was the glorious first-fruits. He will not then stand at the confines of one tomb, to raise one beloved friend; but in the air, he will give one mighty, omnific shout, and all his sleeping dead shall hear his voice, and live, and come forth, as loyal subjects, to hail with rapture their descending king. In what beauty will they be arrayed!—possessing bodies like unto Christ's glorious body, spiritual, undying even as the body

of their exalted head. Him they shall behold, and shall be transformed unto his celestial likeness, and as they have borne the image of the earthy, so now shall they bear the image of the heavenly, and shall be kings and priests to God and the Lamb for ever. Let this subject reconcile us to the loss of friends, and let it cheer the Christian in the hour of nature's decay, and in the article of death itself. Yes, Jesus, who raised Lazarus, lives, and because he liveth, all his saints shall live also.

Sept. 21.

CHRIST WASHING HIS DISCIPLES' FEET.

And began to wash the disciples' feet. —

John xiii. 5.

IN our last exercise, we witnessed the power and glory of Jesus in the resurrection of Lazarus from the dead. Now we are called upon to witness his amazing humility and condescension in stooping to wash the disciples' feet. What majesty and lowliness distinguished the actions of Jesus ! What heavenly grandeur, and yet what earthly condescension ! He by whom all things were created and unto whom the ascriptions of the myriads of spirits in glory are rendered, disdains not to be girt about with a towel, washing the feet of his

own creatures, and wiping them with the towel with which he was girded. What a proof that Jesus became the servant of servants. What an example of tender meekness and voluntary humiliation in the Son of God. Who can imagine the scene without being affected? Who can reflect upon it without being ashamed? Man, a worm of the earth, is inflated with pride, and takes every occasion to display his authority over those whom he considers to be beneath him, while the creator of man, the Lord of angels, is seen stooping to the lowest office, and washing his disciples' feet. And wherefore did he do it? He himself informs us that it was, that they might not assume lordship over each other, but that in love and humility they might also wash each other's feet. Christ is therefore our great model; to him we are always to look, his example always to copy, and his lowly spirit always to evince. We are to regard all the family of believers as our brethren, and to cultivate towards each of them unfeigned esteem and fervent love. In all cases we are to think more highly of them than of ourselves, and be ready to perform any act of hospitality, and, if necessary, even to wash their feet. Such did Jesus, and such is the application which he made of his own conduct.

“ Lord, that I may learn of thee,
Give me true humility :

Wean my soul, and keep it low,
Willing thee alone to know."

Sept. 22.

CHRIST THE WAY.

I am the Way.—*John xiv. 6.*

THE Christian is professedly a pilgrim, a pilgrim on his way to glory. He is seeking a better country, that is to say, a heavenly one. He looks upwards beyond the glittering starry skies, and sings,

"There is my house and portion fair,
My treasure and my heart are there,
And my abiding home."

To this world of happiness and rest, Jesus is the way. A clear description of that blessed world was never given, until Jesus was manifested in the flesh, and brought life and immortality to light by his gospel. He spoke of it in the most plain and familiar terms, called it his "father's house," the place of many mansions. And on some occasions, he referred to its purity, and its celestial glory. How splendid must the imperial palace of Jehovah be! —the seat of his heavenly court, the residence of his spiritual and glorious hosts, where he is seated on his high and lofty throne, in overwhelming splendour of eternal light. To dwell in the presence of God,

is supreme felicity and eternal life. Here is fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore. Christ is the way also, because he only can confer the *title* to the possession of heaven. Heaven is the inheritance, and we become heirs, through the justifying grace of Jesus. By faith in his mediatorial work, we become the sons of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. Jesus also imparts the *meetness* necessary to its enjoyment. Before it can be enjoyed, we must be made meet; this he effects by the cleansing power of his blood, as communicated by the sanctifying influences of his Holy Spirit. Thus he makes us partakers of his own nature, and renders it capable of participating in his glory. Then he is the way, as he is our glorious *leader* and *example*. He is the guide of his people, and he hath left us an example, that we should follow his steps. O yes, he as our forerunner, has gone before, and has opened a new and living way into the holiest place, and hath consecrated it for us, by his precious blood. No man can come to the possession of the Father's favour on earth, or the possession of the glory he bestows in heaven, but through him.

Sept. 23.

CHRIST THE WAY.

PART II.—*John* xiv. 6.

JESUS is the only way to eternal glory. There

is but one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. He is the one immutable foundation, the rock of ages, and other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Christ. To him as the way, all the prophets testified ; and John, as his illustrious harbinger and herald, proclaimed him as the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world. It is the especial work of the ministry, to point inquiring penitent souls to Jesus, as the only refuge and saviour from the wrath to come. And in doing this, the distinguishing features of this way must be specified. Its *freeness* must be proclaimed, that it is not restricted to a select few of mankind, but that Christ is the Saviour of all men, especially of them that believe. That there is no condition, natural or moral, which can exclude from Jesus and his salvation, but the self-willed and persevering exercise of unbelief. He hath declared that whosoever cometh unto him, he will in no wise cast out. Then its *gratuitousness* must be announced. As it is free to all, so it is free to all on the most gracious terms ; there is no moral fitness required. No meritorious service is demanded. Unworthy, wretched, and truly despicable, rebellious sinners, may approach Jesus as they are, for

“ All the fitness he requireth,
Is to feel their need of him.”

Then it is a way of *sure* and *certain blessedness*. All who have received Jesus, and walk in him, possess

peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Their course infallibly tends to eternal life. No evil can come near them, no mischief can befall them; abiding in him they cannot perish, neither can any pluck them out of his hands. They go from strength to strength, every one of them at last, appears before God in the celestial Zion.

Jesus my Lord thou only art,
Salvation's blessed way,
Oh, cheer my heart, and keep my feet
Unto eternal day.

Sept. 24.

CHRIST THE WONDERFUL.

And his name shall be called Wonderful.—Isaiah ix. 6.

WHEN the angel of the Lord, (doubtless none other than the Son of God,) appeared to Manoah, and was asked his name, he said, "Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is SECRET, or WONDERFUL." (Judges iii. 18.) Now this is the very title the evangelical prophet is here applying to the Redeemer: his name, he says, shall be called wonderful. How truly applicable is this title to Christ! He is wonderful in every respect in which he can be contemplated. As the Deity, he must of course be past finding out. But he is wonderful in all that relates to his mediatorial person, offices,

and work. Consider the wonderful constitution of his person. Jehovah-Jesus, God, manifest in the flesh. Eternity, united to a span of human existence. Omnipotence dwelling in the weakness of our manhood. The Great and most high God, assuming human form, and really allied by the most mysterious of all unions, to a nature which had become degraded and worthless, by reason of transgression. Then too, how wonderful that notwithstanding that union, his own purity and dignity remained unaffected; he partook not of one feature of our depravity, of one sinful infirmity. How marvellous indeed that the glory of Jehovah of hosts, should be enshrined in a tabernacle of flesh, and dwell amongst us, that the splendour of his Divinity should be beheld, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. In the mysterious formation of Christ's human nature, the Holy Ghost employed his miraculous influence in a way, unknown before, and thus produced a divinely glorious personage, who is the wonder both of heaven and earth. O let us contemplate the character of our adorable and wonderful Jesus. Here our thoughts may be employed to our real profit and abiding welfare. Here is a mystery, which prophets and apostles, yea and angels have endeavored to explore, but in vain.

“ 'Tis mystery all let men adore,
And angel minds enquire no more.”

Sept. 25.

CHRIST THE WONDERFUL.

PART II.—*Isaiah ix. 6.*

As Jesus was wonderful in the constitution of his person, and in his marvellous conception, so also was he distinguished for the wonderful office which he assumed, and the works which he effected. In previous ages, God had separated his servants to various duties and pursuits. Some had filled the prophetic, others the priestly, and others the kingly office. Some were rulers over the people, others teachers, and others the generals, or leaders of their armies. In Christ all these offices centered, on him all these duties devolved. He was emphatically the prophet of the most high God, the priest after the order of Melchisedec, and Zion's great and glorious king. He came to rule over his people, to instruct the ignorant, and to be the illustrious captain of salvation. And he possessed all the requisites for these various offices, and that in the most perfect degree. He was copiously anointed with the Spirit of prophecy, and knew all things. The sacred unction rested on his priestly head, in all its sanctifying plenitude. Wisdom, power, and essential dignity contributed to elevate him as the King of kings, and Lord of lords. His rule was associated with perfect and infallible knowledge, and spotless justice and equity. As

As a teacher, he spake and taught as no man ever else did; he spake with divine authority and power, so that the people were astonished at his doctrine, and exclaimed, "Never man spake like this man." And as the Captain of God's sacred host, he went forth to conflict, and spoiled all his foes, and returned to his throne, as the Bozrah conqueror, terrible to his adversaries, yet mighty to save. O the amazing combination of qualities in our wonderful Redeemer! Greatness and humility, courage and meekness, power and voluntarily assumed weakness, glory and abasement, riches and poverty, holy, wise, omnipotent, and eternal, yet accounted base, utterly worthless, and at last actually despised, and put to death.

"All Hail, mysterious King!

Hail David's ancient root!

Thou righteous branch which thence did'st spring,

To give the nations fruit."

As Jesus is wonderful in his person and offices, so he is also wonderful in the titles by which he is set forth. He is the great, mighty, and only true and wise God. He is the Prince of the kings of the earth — the Lord of armies — the only living and true Potentate — King of kings — Governor of the nations — and Proprietor of the universe. Before him the loftiest seraphs bend, and all the

angels of God worship him. The Father speaks of him as his fellow, his eternal delight, and says unto him, "thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." All ascriptions of praise, and blessing, and honor, and power, and glory, and rule, and dominion, are presented to him by the intellectual hosts of glory, incessantly :

Before his feet the countless hosts
Of seraphim do fall,
And, with profoundest awe, unite
To crown him Lord of all.

He is wonderful in all his works ; his works are those of true and essential divinity. He hath created all things by the energy of his omnific voice, and he upholdeth all things by the word of his power. Here then Christ appears before us in all the inconceivable greatness and grandeur of his boundless operations and works. Who then can understand his wonderful character, or by searching, find him out to perfection ? O the depths of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God ! And yet in redemption it appears that he has exceeded all his other works, that here has been a mightier and grander display of his essential and infinite perfections ; hence, says the poet,

" Our thoughts are lost in reverend awe,
We love and we adore ;
The first archangel never saw,
So much of God before."

O yes, in redemption we have not the hidings, but the manifestations of his glory and power; here is not a partial, but a full display of the glories of the divine nature.

“Here the whole Deity is known,
Nor dares the creature guess,
Which of the glories brightest shone,
The justice or the grace.”

Sept. 26.

CHRIST THE WONDERFUL.

PART IV.—*Isaiah ix. 6.*

CHRIST's love is wonderful. If we consider the objects of his love, how sinful, wretched, and unworthy they were of the least favorable regard. Yet he pitied, and had compassion even on the ungodly. And the intensity of his love towards us is wonderful. He loved us with a love altogether unparalleled and unknown. He loved us so much as to yield himself a free atoning sacrifice for our guilt. Loved us more than he loved the dignities and joys of his glorious and imperial palace. Herein is love; love setting all description, and all human conception utterly at defiance, love that passeth all understanding. His sufferings were wonderful. Well might he be called, “A man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs.” How varied, yet how

deeply intense were his sufferings ! He suffered poverty, calumny, and hatred ; he was bitterly persecuted, falsely charged, unjustly tried, and wickedly condemned to die. He was scourged, buffeted, spit upon, and nailed to the cross. In dying, he was ridiculed, taunted, and mocked. Earth and heaven seemed combined to cause the waters of affliction to cover his sacred spirit, and the waves of trouble, in successive rolling billows, went over his blessed head.

“ Oh ! Lamb of God was ever love,
Was ever grief like thine ?

His life in all its stages was wonderful. From the announcement of his incarnation, to his last shout upon the cross, there was one continued series of great and astonishing events. He spake as never man spake ; he lived, and prayed, and blessed men, in a way peculiar to himself. He arose upon our world, as the great and wonderful orb of spiritual day, and in a sky of sable blackness—except as it was streaked with the crimson of his precious blood ; he set on Calvary’s elevated and solemn summit.

Sept. 27.

CHRIST THE COUNSELLOR.

Counsellor.—Isaiah ix. 6.

It was predicted of Jesus, that there should rest

upon him the Spirit of "counsel and might." And there never was any so well qualified for giving counsel as the blessed Jesus. His *knowledge and wisdom* are infinite; he knows all things connected with the past, present, and future, therefore error with him is impossible. Infallibility in its most absolute and extended application, belongs to him. And this infallibility of understanding in Jesus, applies to all subjects connected with man and Jehovah, with earth and heaven, and with time and eternity. Then his *fidelity* is unimpeachable. As he cannot err, neither can he violate the principles of equity and truth. Insincerity often distinguishes the counsels of men, sometimes arising from a desire to flatter, at other times the operation of selfish feeling, but Jesus ever exhibited the truth, the whole truth, and the truth at all times. Then his counsel was associated with *tenderness and affection*. He ever spoke the truth in love. Even when he uttered those fearful denunciations against the Pharisees, his heart so overflowed with love, that his address was succeeded by a flood of tears, his compassionate heart was melted down, when he contemplated the ruin their incorrigibleness would bring upon them. This affection never forsook him for a single instant, even in the agonies of a death, which human cruelty was inflicting. He prayed, "Father forgive them, they know not what they do." Then as our counsellor, he is *ever easy of access*. He is never far from those who seek his

face in sincerity and truth. If we acknowledge him in all our ways, and refer all our concerns to his counsel, he will infallibly direct our steps. O then let us commit our ways to him, that he may bring them to pass. To whom else shall we go, but to Jesus, who has the reins of universal government, and the words of eternal life.

Sept. 28.

CHRIST THE COUNSELLOR.

PART II.—*Isaiah ix. 6.*

THE counsels of Jesus relate to all our interests both in time and eternity. Strangers and pilgrims on the earth, we are in danger of wandering, and missing our providential way. We know not what is best for us. Our choice of temporal things may be as misguided and unhappy as that of Lot, who chose the rich and fertile, but vile and ruinous plains of Sodom. The Lord must choose our inheritance for us. We are not to be anxious about temporal things, but diligently to employ the means he hath appointed, and then to cast all our care upon him, seeing that he careth for us. If we devoutly seek his kingdom and righteousness first, all other things shall be added unto us. His counsels have especial reference to the soul. He will direct our souls into the way of life and prosperity.

Our souls shall live, if we seek the Lord. He will keep our hearts and minds in the enjoyment of his love, and in the possession of peace, which passeth all understanding. He will direct our souls into all truth, and lead us in the way of righteousness, for his name's sake. He counsels us as to the duties which must be discharged—the dangers that must be avoided—the self-denial that we must exercise—the crosses we must endure—the graces we must cultivate—the tempers we must display—and the meetness we must obtain for the enjoyment of future and eternal blessedness. He counsels us as to our conflicts, our trials, our sufferings, our privileges, and our blessings: he counsels us how we must live, so as to glorify him, and be happy, and how we may die in peace, and be blessed for ever. His counsels relate to heaven and eternity, and clearly reveal the only way, and direct to the only certain means of obtaining immortality and eternal life. And his counsels are free to all. And they are free to all upon the most gracious terms. For, if any man lack wisdom, and ask of him, it shall be given liberally, and he upbraideth not. Then the precious resolution of the psalmist must be suitable to every heaven-born mind, “Thou shalt guide me by thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory!”

Sept. 29.

JESUS THE MIGHTY GOD.

The Almighty God.—Isaiah ix. 6.

Not only is proper deity ascribed to Jesus, but also all those essential and infinite qualities by which the character of Jehovah is distinguished. Hence he is represented as the “holy, holy, Lord of hosts.” He is called “the only wise God,” “the true God,” “God, over all, blessed for ever.” The prophets describe him as the “Mighty God,” that is, the God of omnipotence, “the Almighty.” It is not necessary that we refer to his divine and essential works, to perceive the greatness of his power. As the Mediator between God and man, as the Shiloh and Messiah of the world, he gave the most striking display of his unbounded strength. The word of his power effected the most marvellous and unheard-of miracles: he only had to speak, and all he willed was produced. Disease, misery, and woe, vanished before the rays of his celestial face. He expelled demons, created and multiplied a few loaves, so as to feed thousands; he brought back again departed spirits, reanimated dead bodies, and hushed the noisy tempest into a perfect calm. When he spake to those sent to him to arrest him, they fell as dead men at his feet. All power was given unto him, both in heaven and on earth. It was by virtue of his might that he over-

came all the powers of hell, spoiled death, and burst the barriers of the tomb, and thus proved himself to be the Son of God with power. Had our Redeemer only possessed the ability of a creature, he would have been pressed to the earth: the design of salvation would never have been effected; Satan would have obtained perpetual triumphs, and the myriads of the human race would have been lost for ever. But Jehovah laid help upon one that was "mighty"—upon his own fellow, the Lord mighty in battle, and able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him.

Sept. 30.

CHRIST THE EVERLASTING FATHER.

Everlasting Father.—Isaiah ix. 6.

THE title here given to Jesus does not confound the distinctions in the deity, so as to render the Son the same person with the Father. Father often signifies founder, or source, and the true rendering of the text has been generally supposed to be, "Father of eternity," or "Father of the world to come." In the one case the passage refers to the proper eternity of Jesus: hence it is written, "He was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." Micah also says, "His going forth hath been of old, from everlasting:" hence, too, he said, "Before Abraham was,

I am," and he is represented as being "before all things." But he is not only from everlasting, but he is the Father, or Source of all things. Now, it is clear, from Scripture testimony, that "by him all things were created!"—that, "without him was not any thing made that was made." Then he is especially the Father of all his spiritual posterity. By his word and spirit he quickens and raises up a seed to serve and bless him. And we may thus perceive how he may be properly styled the Father of the world to come, applying that term either to the establishment of the gospel kingdom, or to the consummate blessedness of glory. He hath founded a spiritual empire which shall exist to the end of time, and then shall be perpetuated in its perfected state through all eternity. He is the Father of this everlasting kingdom—this glorious world to come: his reign is an everlasting reign, and of his dominion there shall be no end. Jehovah, addressing him, says, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." Then, a good prospect of a happy eternity is only to be obtained as an act of his mercy and grace. He alone can bestow the title to the blessed mansions in the skies: he alone can confer the meetness for eternal blessedness: he alone will open the gates of the celestial Paradise, and place the unfading crown upon the faithful victor's head. Happy they who have believingly said, "This God shall be our God for ever and ever, and our guide even unto death."

Oct. 1.

JESUS THE PRINCE OF PEACE.

The Prince of Peace.—Isaiah ix. 6.

EZEKIEL, when predicting the appearance of the Christ, spake of him as "David the Prince," and Daniel describes him as, "Messiah the Prince," and Peter represents him as the "Prince of Life." Isaiah refers to him as the "Prince of Peace." Numerous are the passages which associate his character and reign with happiness and peace. In his days says the Psalmist, shall righteousness flourish, and "abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth." His covenant is a "covenant of peace." "He will ordain peace for us." He will make Zion's "officers peace;" and he will "extend peace unto her as a river." His mediation was expressly to obtain peace, and he "made peace by the blood of the cross." Hence, his reign is a reign of peace; he sends his ambassadors forth to preach the gospel of peace,—to proclaim peace to them that are near, and to them that are afar off. Hence, the kingdom which he imparts to the believing heart, is a kingdom of righteousness and "peace" and joy in the Holy Ghost. He blesses his people with peace,—the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keeps their hearts and minds by Christ Jesus. The legacy he bequeathed to his church, is a legacy of peace. "Peace I leave

with you, my peace give I unto you." And this comprehends every good, and desirable blessing, such as justification, acceptance, adoption, and heirship to eternal life. The peace he bestows is spiritual, and therefore adapted to the faculties of mind. It is divine, and therefore like every other special gift of God is supremely excellent and precious. It is abiding, such as the world giveth not, and cannot possibly take away. It is not affected by the changing scenes of earth, but is mellowed down and becomes more rich in affliction, abides the dreary ordeal of death, and rises into more exuberant sweetness when surrounded by the celestial atmosphere of the heavenly Eden.

Oct. 2.

JESUS THE PRINCE OF PEACE.

PART II.—*Isaiah ix. 6.*

WHEN Christ came, angels celebrated his advent in songs of praise, and the subject of their anthem was, "Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth, and good-will towards men." Sin had filled earth with confusion and misery, it had set men in a state of variance with God, and had made men hostile towards each other. In addition to which, the guilty heart of man was the seat of wretchedness, anxiety, and remorse. Jesus came, that har-

mony might be restored between earth and heaven : that men might be bound together in the closest bonds of affectionate brotherhood, and that the sinner might receive the blessings of heavenly serenity and peace. Now Christ as Prince of Peace, sways his benign and gracious sceptre for the accomplishment of this blessed purpose. And submission to his benevolent sway, will infallibly lead to the most blessed and peaceful results. Let us then ascertain as to the connection which subsists between this Prince and our souls. Are we found amongst the number of his loyal and obedient subjects? Do we honour, love, and serve him as our rightful king? Are his statutes the rejoicings of our hearts? Have we a holy zeal for the extension of his empire and the diffusion of his glory? Do we enjoy the unspeakable peace which he bestows to his people? If so, then how ought we to rejoice in our high and heavenly calling, and to feel deeply solicitous that his rule should be extended among all nations, from the rivers to the ends of the earth. His reign is destined to be universal. All people shall finally be blessed in him, and shall call him blessed, — then will the world be renewed in righteousness — then will war and bloodshed cease for ever — then will the curse be removed — then will Paradise be regained, and the whole earth become one consecrated Eden to the Lord. Amen, the Lord hasten it, in his time !

Oct. 3.

CHRIST A TESTATOR.

The Testator.—*Heb. ix. 16.*

THE gospel contains the will and testament of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the publication of what Jesus hath obtained and bequeathed to a poor perishing world. 'That he might have a legacy to bestow, he assumed our nature, and thus became our kinsman and brother. In that nature he procured for us the blessings of eternal salvation. His testament he caused to be written, and he hath signed and ratified it; and its invaluable blessings may now be freely received by all the legatees. The legacy which Jesus hath bequeathed includes a great variety of blessings both for time and eternity. One of these is pardon for sin, another is peace of conscience, a third is a new nature — a renewed heart. And he hath also given to us great and precious promises, wherein is contained all that is needful for our happiness, prosperity, and safety. Then there are the promises of eternal glory. Glory like his own; for he giveth of his own glory to all them that believe in his name, yea, he giveth himself. Jesus in all his fulness and glory belongeth to his people. They are his, and he is theirs, and he is the true God and eternal life. so that they who possess him enjoy all things. The legatees are all true be-

lievers. By faith we obtain the transfer of Christ's legacy to our souls — he who believeth hath the Son, and he who hath the Son hath also eternal life. By faith, we become the children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. Unbelief rejects both the testator and the testament, and excludes the soul from all the benefits of redeeming love and grace.

Oct. 4.

CHRIST A TESTATOR.

PART II.—*Heb.* ix. 16.

LET us briefly contemplate the dignity and greatness of our testator. Our testator is the true Son of God, the heir of all things, the Lord of angels, and the Prince of glory. His glories are infinite, his riches imperishable, and his kingdom ruleth over all. Then, also, consider the goodness and love of this testator. This will be seen, if we reflect upon the objects of his regards — objects worthless, poor, and wretched, without any claim or merit to any thing except his wrath and severe displeasure. Then consider the sacrifices he made for their well-being. For their sakes, although incomparably happy and rich, yet he became the man of sorrows, the child of poverty, and the victim of death. As our Mediator, he had the inhe-

ritance to purchase with his own precious blood, before he could bequeath it to us. And then reflect upon the legacy itself. How suited to our exigencies—just what the immortal spirit of man requires—exactly adapted to supply our present need, and to meet all our immortal desires. Then, how vast and glorious in its extent!—a legacy which shall enrich myriads of immortal souls—a legacy of unsearchable riches of grace, and of boundless riches of glory. Then consider, finally, the perpetuity of this legacy. He does not bestow fading treasures—an inheritance which may be exhausted, or fall into other hands, but a crown of glory, that fadeth not away—an inheritance incorruptible—a mansion, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Have we come to God, by faith in his Son, and obtained a title to this inconceivably rich and glorious legacy? If so, then we have received the earnest into our hearts, even his holy Spirit, who testifies to our adoption, and who hath anointed and sealed us as the heirs of eternal life. If so, the testator will be the object of our supreme love, and his testament will be frequently and gratefully read, and the inheritance will be the subject of our constant joyous anticipation and delight.

“Then let our songs abound,
And every tear be dry;
We’re marching through Immanuel’s ground
To fairer worlds on high.”

Oct. 5.

CHRIST A FRIEND.

A Friend that sticketh closer than a brother. —

Prov. xviii. 24.

OF Jesus it was said, that he was the Friend of publicans and sinners, and in the true sense of that term he was really so. Not that he had any sympathy with them in their evil practises, not that he had any fellowship with their spirits, but that he truly compassionated their state and misery, and employed all his gracious influence to save them from it. In this broad and glorious sense, he is the Friend of the whole world. For he hath loved it, and given himself a ransom for its guilt, and freely invites all its wretched inhabitants to come unto him, that they may obtain everlasting life. But he is the genuine and sincere friend of his church. Here are the objects of his complacent regards; here are his true friends, whom he acknowledges, who are of one spirit with him, and with whom, a close and happy union exists. A friend feels a benevolent and solicitous interest in our well-being. A friend, is one whose best feelings are employed for our comfort and happiness, where there is a constant prevailing of good-will, and complacency towards us. All this belongs eminently to Jesus. His love to us is immeasurable, his benevolent

regards pass all human understanding; he hath displayed unspeakable interest in all that relates to our welfare, both in this world, and in that which is to come. The outgoings of his love towards us, have flowed in a thousand channels, and have been exhibited in an indescribable variety of forms. We are surrounded by the tokens of his goodness, by the manifest proofs of his affectionate regards. His friendship characterises all the movements of his providence—is engraven on the whole volume of revelation—is the source of all our gracious communications—and will form the essence of our future eternal felicity,

Oci. 6.

CHRIST A FRIEND.

PART II.—*Prov. xviii. 24.*

It must be obvious that Christ's friendship to us, is disinterested. We cannot possibly confer any advantage upon him. He is our friend, that he may be the bountiful communicator, and we the happy recipients of his grace. The benefits he thus bestows are neither few, nor small. He finds us poor, and he enriches us; naked, and he clothes us; outcasts, and he takes us into his family; he finds us sick, and bruised, and bound, and he healeth our wounds, pours into the soul his precious balm, and brings

us into the liberty of the people of God. Afterwards he imparts of the graces of his spirit, and causes the Comforter to abide with us always. Jesus is also a tender sympathetic friend : hence he is with his people in all their trials and distresses, and he is willing to bear all their burdens, and to deliver them out of all their distresses. In all their afflictions he is afflicted, and being touched with the feeling of their infirmities, he knows how to succour and deliver the tempted. Then Jesus is also a faithful and intimate friend. His friendship is that of the heart; it consists in true oneness of soul. It is kept up by the exercise of mutual confidence: there is a frequent interchange of mind and feeling. And he reveals all his will to those who love him, and his secret is with those who keep his covenant. His fidelity has been the subject of rejoicing with all his people. All his engagements he hath ever kept. His truth is sacredly inviolable, so that none of his engagements can possibly be broken. He is also a constant and unchangeable friend; he is always of one mind, and nothing can turn him; the same yesterday, to day, and for ever. So that he is our friend now, and will be our friend in sickness, and in death, and our friend for ever and ever. Let Jesus be the object of our absolute confidence, of our supreme love and delight, and let it be the great business of our lives, to obey his will, honour his authority, and to bless and magnify his holy name.

Oct. 7.

CHRIST OUR GARMENT.

Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.—Rom. xiii. 14.

ALL that the soul needs is found in Christ. Sick, he is our physician; poor, he is our riches: guilty and condemned, he is our surety; and naked, he is our garment. Naturally, we have at best but the rags of shame upon us. In the day of conversion, we are stripped from all these, and we put on Christ, and are clothed in the righteousness obtained by faith in his name. Then the Lord is made unto us righteousness, and we appear holy and acceptable before God. This he becomes to us—the white robe, the wedding garment, that which alone makes us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. This garment is complete, it covers the soul all over; every part of the man God views with complacency and delight. This garment is also a lasting one; time and wear, do not impair it. It never loses its beauty and freshness, and will endure for ever and ever. Then this garment is an exceedingly precious and costly one. Not costly to us, for we obtain it without money and without price, but costly to the Saviour; it cost him poverty, shame, sorrow even unto death, and at last death itself. Hence we must know the worth of Christ's precious blood, before we can estimate its real value. This garment must be put on. Christ

only is precious to them that believe. We must receive him in all his benefits, and then only is he our garment of salvation. He must be put on publicly, and our profession must be exhibited before men and before angels. In baptism this is beautifully realised, after exercising faith in Christ, the soul becomes dead to the world and sin, and as such, the old man is laid aside, and being buried with Christ in baptism, the believer then arises, having put on the Lord Jesus Christ. This garment must be worn. We must never appear without it. In the world, in the church, in the closet, in all places and at all times, Christ must be exhibited. This garment will be indispensable to our entrance into the holy regions of the paradise above.

Oct. 8.

CHRIST OUR FORERUNNER.

The Forerunner.—Heb. vi. 20.

JESUS came to open a glorious passage from earth to heaven, from this world of sin and suffering, to the blissful realms of eternal day. This way he personally trod, and has left the impress of his feet, that we might follow him in his course below, and be raised finally to his dwelling and kingdom. He as our forerunner, has gone first to lead the way, and it is ours to follow in his illustrious steps.

His course he commenced at his baptism, when his heavenly Father attested to his Divinity and glory; then he went onwards, fulfilling all the duties of his private life, and exerting all his powers in the public discharge of his official engagements. As our forerunner, he never rested, till all his work on earth was done, and his life and labours finished together on the cross. As our forerunner, he passed through the gate of death, explored the gloomy regions of the grave, and came forth as the resurrection and the life of his people. As our forerunner, at last he ascended on high, led captivity captive, entered into the holiest place of all, sprinkled the eternal mercy-seat with his own blood, and took possession of the celestial mansions, that where he is, all his saints may be also. These mansions he has prepared for his disciples, and if we live to him, we shall live with him, and if we die to him, then shall we be with him for ever, which is far better. But Christ must be loved and followed as the forerunner, we must ever keep him before our eyes, and as he is the author, so he must be the finisher of our faith. Let us rejoice that the way to the holiest is open, and that the forerunner for us hath entered, even Jesus, who is a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec.

Oct. 9.

CHRIST THE END OF THE LAW.

The end of the law.—Rom. x. 4.

THIS passage may either be applied to the ceremonial or moral law. All the institutions of the Levitical economy, were clearly types of Jesus, his person, sufferings or benefits. Every sacrifice, and every offering, and every rite, met with their complete consummation in him. At his death the whole dispensation vanished, and all its ordinances were abolished for ever. The tabernacle, altars, and priesthood, have all now passed away, and the true tabernacle, the real altar, and the great high priest Jesus, is the end and antetype of the whole. But Christ is the end of the moral law—a law which was a perfect transcript of the mind of God—a law, holy, pure, and good. To be acceptable with God, perfect conformity to this law was necessary. Fallen man could not yield the obedience it demanded. It made no provisions for failure, or imperfection. To the disobedient it pronounced the dread sentence of death. Jesus came and fulfilled all its requirements,—he obeyed all its claims,—he embodied the whole of its enactments in his life, and exhibited that law in all its holy beauty and sacred splendour when he tabernacled in our flesh,—his obedience was perfect, constant, and persevering. The law of God was indeed within

his heart, and he fully magnified it, and made it honourable. Its penalties he also endured as the substitute of sinners: though really holy, yet he became, by imputation, the bearer of all the guilt of a ruined world: it was all laid upon him, he endured the whole curse, felt all the wrath sin had incurred, and thus made a way for the justification of the ungodly sinner, who should believe in his name. Here then is the foundation of my hope, the law is not cancelled, it has not become a dead letter, but it has been fulfilled in my nature and on my behalf, by Jesus, who is “the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.”

Oct. 10.

CHRIST THE OBJECT OF FAITH.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.—Acts xvi. 31.

THE examples of good men are often placed before us in the divine word, to excite us to a holy imitation of their virtues and excellencies. But man is never placed before us, as an object of confidence or trust. We are called to hear Moses, to peruse the prophets, and to let the words of the inspired writers, dwell in us, with all wisdom, but we are to trust only in God, and this is his commandment, that we believe only in the name of his son. To believe in Jesus, is to receive God's record

concerning him as the truth : to receive that record with cordial joy and delight, and to rest implicitly upon his person and work for acceptance with God, and eternal life. Jesus is every where exhibited as the object of faith. He is so, to the exclusion of every other : the pious patriarchs all believed in him : all the holy servants of God under the Mosaic economy, believed in him : the Psalmist was perpetually referring to his work and glory : the prophets all testified of him ; and to preach the Gospel is to exhibit Christ, as the son of God, and the Saviour of the world. To the enquiring thousands of Israel, Peter preached Jesus : to the Samaritans, Jesus was preached : to the Jailor, the apostle said, " Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." —and we have no other message to the guilty, distressed and heavy laden sinner, than this, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

Oct. 11.

CHRIST THE OBJECT OF FAITH.

PART II. — *Acts* x. 31.

THERE is no subject more copiously and beautifully illustrated in the word of God, than that of faith ; and in every instance, Jesus is exhibited as its only object. Faith is likened to sight, then we are called to look unto Jesus, to behold the lamb of

God. Faith is likened to hearing, then the subject is the joyful sound of Jesus' precious name. Faith is likened to eating and drinking ; then Jesus is the bread of life, the true manna from heaven, and the only source of the waters of salvation. Faith is compared to the exercise of the hands ; then Christ is God's unspeakable gift, which the believing hand thus receives. Faith is likened to building ; then Christ is the foundation. To learning ; then Christ is the staff of our confidence : to fleeing, then Christ is the city of refuge. Faith is also likened to the committing of a trust, and then all is deposited in the hands of Christ. Thus there is an inseparable connection between faith and Christ ; and nothing but faith in Christ will make us partakers of the benefits of his death. Hearing of Christ will not save us, a profession of Christ is not sufficient, but faith in Christ unites us to him, and by it, we receive him, all he is, and all he has become ours. By faith, we credit all his doctrines as our great prophet and apostle ; by faith, we trust in his scriptural offering as our great High Priest, and by faith, we honor and submit to him as our lawful monarch,—our only king.—How necessary then that we ascertain as to the existence of the principle of faith within our own hearts. Have we believed ? can we say to Jesus, "thou art my Lord and my God" ?

Oct. 12.

EVIDENCES OF FAITH IN CHRIST.

Dost thou believe on the Son of God.—John ix. 35.

How essential it is to solid peace of mind, that we possess sufficient evidences of our faith in the Lord Jesus. The points for our examination in this matter are two:—Is Christ the object of our faith? and is our faith in him genuine, living, saving faith? We cannot conceive of a more important question than “Dost thou believe on the Son of God?” In answering this question, it may materially assist us, if we endeavour to call to mind the means and circumstances by which faith was produced in our hearts. There was a period in our history when we were entire strangers to Christ—when we knew him not, and consequently when we could not believe in him. Then, do we remember when the truth first arrested our attention, and made an impression on our hearts? Do we remember the conflicts in our souls between the principles of faith and unbelief? Do we remember when we were enabled truly and heartily to receive Christ into our hearts, and thus when we were inspired with hope of immortal glory? If we have believed in Jesus, then has condemnation and guilt been removed from our minds, and being justified, we have had peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. And this has also been connected with an

entire change of mind and heart. We shall now see and hear differently, our eyes being opened, and our ears being unstopped. The conversation of our lips and the feelings of our hearts will be spiritual, and Jesus will have to do with all our thoughts. Our meditations on him will be sweet. If we have believed in Jesus, we shall be closely united to him, whereas formerly we were foreigners, and afar off. Have we these signs? If we have not these, we possess not the faith of his children.

Oct. 13.

EVIDENCES OF FAITH IN CHRIST.

PART II.—*John ix. 35.*

IF we believe in Jesus, we shall possess his holy spirit in our hearts; “for if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” But if we have received Jesus, then will his spirit bear witness with ours that we are the children of God.” If we believe in Jesus, we shall ardently love him. Faith works by love. It will produce to him warm and holy affection. He will be infinitely precious to our souls; for “to them that believe he is precious.” His name will be as ointment poured forth. Our souls will feel the power of his constraining love, and we shall exclaim, “we love him, because

he first loved us." Our souls will delight in him, and our lips will exalt and magnify our God and Saviour. Then will he be to us the fairest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely : then will he be our soul's light, and joy, and life, and all-in-all. If we believe in Christ, then shall we be subject to his authority, and obedient to his commands. Real living faith will produce works of holy obedience to the authority and will of Christ. We shall feel his laws to be imperative, and we shall run with cheerfulness in the ways of his statutes and ordinances, to do them. "I will show thee," says the apostle James, "my faith by my works." Finally, if we believe in Christ, we shall be zealous for his glory, and be ready to suffer for his sake. We cannot be indifferent to the cause of him whom we supremely love. We shall be the enemies of the world, and by faith gain a victory over it. We shall feel the necessity of following Christ whithersoever he goeth. We shall take up his cross, and, going without the camp, gladly bear his reproach. Do these signs exist in us? Are we perfectly conscious that Christ is ours, and that we are his? Do we feel assured that we believe in the Son of God? Do we constantly rely upon the divine mercy, and thus realize the holy sentiments of the poet, who says :

"By faith I plunge me in that sea —

Here is my hope, my joy, my rest :

Hither, when hell assaults, I flee,
I look into my Saviour's breast :
Away sad doubts and anxious fear —
'Mercy' is all that's written there !”

Oct. 14

SOLOMON A TYPE OF CHRIST.

A greater than Solomon is here. — Matt. xiv. 42.

It is quite evident that God intended, in many respects, that Solomon should typify the person and kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. His name, which signifies “peaceable,” belongs pre-eminently to the Saviour. Jesus is truly our peacemaker, he is the prince of peace. “In his days shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth.” One of the chief blessings he bestows unto his people is the blessing of his peace. Solomon was the beloved son of the illustrious David, and Jesus is also called the offspring and son of David. As David was king of Israel, so the Father of Jesus is king of the whole earth, whose reign is boundless and eternal. Solomon was distinguished for his knowledge and wisdom. In Jesus all the treasures of knowledge and wisdom dwell : he is the exhaustless fountain of both. Hence he is styled the “wisdom of God.” Solomon was monarch of Israel, and Jesus is king of Zion, and he reigns over the spiritual Israel of

his church. Solomon's empire was extensive, and his reign prosperous and happy.

“Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Doth his successive journies run.”

His empire is destined to be universal, and his glory shall ultimately fill the whole earth. But a greater than Solomon is here. Solomon was a mere man, exceedingly frail and imperfect, mortal in himself, and his kingdom and glory have long since passed away. Jesus is truly divine, the ever-blessed Son of God, whose nature was spotless, whose character was perfectly righteous, and whose kingdom shall endure throughout all generations. Let Jesus be the subject of our contemplations, the object of our supreme love and admiration, and let our souls be obedient to his holy and benevolent sway, so that we may be among his happy and loyal subjects on earth, and then partake of his felicity and glory in the world to come.

Oct. 15.

JESUS THE TRUTH.

I am the truth.—John xiv. 6.

JESUS not only came to proclaim the truth of the mind of God, and the true way to eternal life, but he is the personification of truth. In him it dwells as the fountain and depository, and from him alone it is diffused abroad. He was the sun of truth, diffusing abroad his irradiating beams in

every direction. He is the ocean of truth, from whence all the streams of truth are communicated to every part of his universe. He is the prince of truth: it is a leading feature in his character and reign. His throne is based upon it: his laws are truth embodied: his own mind is the standard of truth. All is true, as it is conformable to it, and all is false as it wants that conformity. His word is the revelation of truth, for it is revealed to us for our instruction, comfort, and salvation. But Jesus is the grand centre of truth: in him all its lines meet. He is the truth of prophecies which all referred to him, and in him received their full accomplishment. He is the truth of promises, being himself the great blessing promised, emphatically the mercy promised to the fathers. He is the truth of all the types, every one of which received its completion in him. He is the truth of all the sacrifices and ordinances, which were but shadows of that true sacrifice which should be offered in the end of the world, once, for all. He is the truth of the law, for he obeyed it, honoured it, manifested it, and made it honourable. He is the truth of the gospel, being the sum and substance of it, giving to it all its blessedness, preciousness, and power. All truth dwells in him, and it dwells in him in an infinite degree, and in him it is unchangeable and eternal. It is the Christian's privilege to receive him, to honour him, and to confide in him, as the truth. By so doing, we receive him into our

souls, in all his inexpressibly precious and saving benefits.

Oct. 16.

JESUS THE TRUTH.

PART II. — *John* xiv. 6.

IF Jesus be the truth, then how necessary it is that all religious ministers be found to harmonise with his revealed will. We need not walk in uncertainty and error, seeing that we possess so sure and infallible a directory in all truth. However plausible our views may be, if they will not bear this test, then are they not genuine, and it will be for our happiness and safety immediately to reject them. We must buy the truth, however much it may cost us, and we must sell it not, however great the price that may be offered for it. As Jesus is the truth, then we see, that to preach the gospel, is to preach Christ: and that is not gospel truth, which is not essentially connected with Christ. All its doctrines, duties, blessings, and privileges must have relation to Christ. He must be exhibited as the foundation, the centre, the Alpha and the Omega, the all in all. Whoever the Christian minister, wherever he goes, before whomsoever he stands, he must have one grand leading subject, and that must be Jesus as the truth. We give evidence of

our practical regard to Jesus, as the truth, when we exhibit his spirit and imitate his example. When we speak as he spake; when we live, and walk, and act as he our great exemplar did; when we set him always before us, and follow him as dear children. Does not the Christian character involve in it, the diffusion of the truth? Every believer should shew forth Christ, and be employed in making his gospel known to those who are without. We should tell the perplexed and doubting, that certain happiness is to be found only in Christ. We should place before the enquiring, Jesus, as the only way to comfort and peace: and we should assiduously labour, in holding up the truth until all the errors of Paganism, Mahomedanism, Judaism, and Popery be excluded from our world, and all men know Jesus, as the only Saviour, and be blessed in him.

Oct. 17.

CHRIST A PORTION.

The Lord is my Portion.—*Lam.* iii. 24.

WHEN man came from the hands of his Creator, he was holy, great, and happy: besides, he was also rich, God made him lord of this lower world, and gave him the delightful Eden, as his happy abode. But sin robbed him of all he possessed; caused his expulsion from paradise, and involved him

in shame and wretchedness. God in his mercy, exercised compassion towards him, and in the boundlessness of his love, has bestowed upon him another portion; he has given to him, his only begotten Son, who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be made rich. This gift, this divine portion we receive by faith, and thus do we become heirs of the unspeakable riches of his grace. Then we may say, "The Lord is my portion." In this portion, there is precisely what the soul requires. Christ is suited to the sinner's state and need. He is a portion of knowledge to the ignorant, a portion of mercy to the guilty, a portion of peace to the wretched, and a portion of holiness to the impure. Man is starving, and Jesus is the bread of heaven. Man is poor, and Jesus is the pearl of inexpressible worth. Man is sick, and Jesus is the infallible physician of souls. Man is dead, and exposed to eternal death, and Jesus is the resurrection and the life. Man is lost, and Jesus is the salvation of his people. In the possession of this portion, we enjoy peace and righteousness, and joy in the Holy Ghost. There is no want which it doth not supply; no misery which it doth not remove; and no solid felicity, which it doth not impart. How truly happy are all those who can say, "The Lord is my Portion."

Oct. 18.

CHRIST, A PORTION.

PART II.—*L. m. iii. 24.*

As Jesus is a portion just suited to the soul's necessities, and desires, so he is also an all-sufficient portion; all the world without him cannot make us happy, but though we may have all the world against us, if we possess him we may be happy and rejoice. If we possess him we cannot fail to have all that is really best to enjoy, for if Christ is ours, then all things are ours; for if God spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also with him, freely give us all things; If the Lord is our portion, then we may be said to inherit all things. Jesus is also a constant portion. Earthly portions are always uncertain, exposed to a thousand contingencies, they are never absolutely secure. Many have been nursed in affluence, and educated for elevated stations in life, who have been called to spend their days in poverty and distress. How often have the fairest prospects been blighted, and the highest hopes succeeded by disappointment and sorrow. Mutability is inscribed upon all beneath the sun. The fashion of this world passeth away: riches are emphatically identified with uncertainty, but the portion of the soul abideth for ever. Other portions at best can only

meet our temporal wants ; but this satisfies the soul, the nobler, the immortal part of man. As this portion is all-sufficient, and abiding, so it is also an eternal portion. God is the strength of our hearts and “our portion *for ever.*” Death levels all human and earthly distinctions. There is no difference between the rich and the poor, in that common house appointed for all living ; men may idolize their wealth as they may, but they must leave it all behind : it has no currency in that world into which they are hastening. How different is the portion of the believer : he only possesses his portion in part now, death gives him its glorious completion. He has only the earnest now, then he will have the whole undivided inheritance, and have it for ever and ever : — For it is incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away. Christ is his salvation now, and he will be his exceeding great and eternal reward.

Oct. 19.

CHRIST A PORTION.

PART III.—*Lam.* iii. 24.

SEEING that Jesus is the soul's all-sufficient, constant, and eternal portion, is it not desirable to ascertain how he may be obtained ? This portion is God's gift to the world. In the gospel, God

reveals and offers this gift for our acceptance. And all he requires from us is, cordially, by faith, to receive him as the salvation of our souls. This portion, then, is received by faith. Faith is the soul's coming to him — the soul's cordially embracing him as the unspeakable gift of God. It is not the mere assent of the mind to the truth concerning Christ; but the warm and hearty opening of the soul to him: for it is required that we believe in him with our hearts, and make confession of him with our mouths, to salvation. And as Christ is thus received, so also he is thus enjoyed. We must live by faith in the Son of God. It is the province of faith to make use of Jesus as a portion to supply all the wants of the soul. Faith feeds upon him as the bread of life, rests upon him as the rock of ages, and looks constantly to him as the author and the finisher of the work of salvation. And as this portion is enjoyed by faith, so also it is thus retained. We hold it by faith. Ceasing to believe, we become again poor, and wretched, and blind, and miserable. Ceasing to believe, the portion is lost, and all the promises are forfeited. The apostle exulted, in the prospect of martyrdom, that he had "kept the faith." Keeping the faith, and thus only is the portion kept. How important, then, is faith! how desirable that it should increase, and grow stronger and stronger, that we lose not the great and glorious reward. With grateful affection to God, and in the exertion of

faith and hope and obedience, let us be found constantly looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, unto eternal life.

Oct. 20.

CHRIST A FOUNTAIN.

Fountain opened for sin and uncleanness.

Zech. xiii. 1.

THE prophet obviously referred to the Saviour's death upon the cross, when, by the shedding of his blood, full atonement should be made for the sins of a ruined world. There seems to have been a literal accomplishment of this prophecy, when the side of Jesus was pierced, and there flowed therefrom blood and water. Then it was manifest indeed that Jesus had expired, and in that death he opened the fountain for sin and uncleanness. Christ's merits have respect both to the guilt and pollution of iniquity. In his blood we have full remission of sins, being justified freely by his grace. That same blood also cleanseth from all sin, so that guilt and pollution are both erased by his precious blood. And its efficacy extends to guilt in all its enormity, and to pollution, however inveterate and universal. Publicans, and harlots, and thieves, found it all-sufficient to remove both the guilt and impurity of sin. Even those very individuals who were guilty of Christ's death, and who

imprecated his blood to rest upon them, found it to be sufficiently efficacious to atone for the crime of shedding it: hence, three thousand came to its saving power in one day. The Gentile nations, whose idolatrous system of worship decorated vice, to make it still more popular, were cleansed from all their filthiness by the application of Christ's precious blood, so that there is no case absolutely desperate and hopeless, if earnestly and believingly they do but come to this fountain, opened for sin and uncleanness.

Oct. 21.

CHRIST A FOUNTAIN.

PART II.—Zec. xiii. 1.

THIS fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, is distinguished for its *freeness*. It is not as a sealed well, only acceptable to the favoured few, but it is open and free for all. Hence, in the gospel there is every thing to encourage, even the vilest of the vile to come and wash and be clean. How many sweet invitations, how many tender appeals, how many affectionate expostulations, are therein contained! The Spirit, and the Bride say, come, the heralds of Christ are expressly sent to say, come, and all that will, may come and partake of the waters of life freely. Then this fountain is also

distinguished for its *abundance*. Would not a general application exhaust it? Oh no! Here is a self-supplying fountain; it can never be exhausted; millions may come, and its healing and purifying streams flow as freely and plentifully as ever. The infinite mercy of God must be exhausted, the boundless efficacy of Christ's blood must fail, before this fountain shall be inefficient to the sinner's salvation. Then it is also characterized for its *perpetuity*. As its abundance cannot be lessened, so neither shall it cease to flow, until the last sinner that shall exist in our world has experienced its life giving power. For eighteen hundred years it has incessantly rolled its healing waters around our world, and it shall do so, until this gospel of the kingdom has been preached as a witness to every creature, and then shall the end come.

Oct. 22.

CHRIST A FOUNTAIN.

PART III.—Zec. xiii. 1.

SEVERAL momentous questions may be addressed to us in respect of this fountain. Have we credited the gospel testimony concerning it? Have we had experimental access to it? Do we enjoy the happy results of its pardoning and purifying influences?

Have we heard, and washed, — and returned cleansed? If so, then God demands our grateful affection in return. He expects us to make redeeming love the burden of our songs. And when Jesus has shed his love abroad in the heart, it will constrain the soul to cry out “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases.” Should we not also recommend this fountain to others? How many spiritually sick and wretched there are around us. The gospel enjoins that we love our neighbours as ourselves. How can we exhibit that affection more sincerely, than by using all our instrumentality to bring them to the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness. Oh! yes, every christian is bound to exhibit Christ! To tell the sinner of the only Saviour — to tell the weary of the only rest — to tell the dying of the only life — and the perishing and lost, of the only way to everlasting salvation. Dwelling upon this theme will make ourselves holier and happier, and may prove of everlasting benefit to our fellow men. O yes, let us tell to all around us,—

“This fountain unseal’d, stands open for all,
Who long to be heal’d, the great and the small,
Here’s strength for the weakly that hither are led,
Here’s health to the sickly, and life for the dead.

This fountain, though rich, from charge is quite clear
The poorer the wretch, the welcomer here.

Come needy, and guilty, come loathsome and bare,
Though lep'rous and filthy, come just as you are."

Oct. 23.

CHRIST AN ALTAR.

We have an altar. — *Heb. xiii. 10.*

THE altar was that on which the sacrifices were laid when offered to the Lord. Some of them were made of earth, others of stone, and some of brass and gold. Jesus is the christian's altar, as well as the sacrifice, by which we are redeemed to God. And these various altars seem to have typified the human and divine nature of the Redeemer. By the altar of earth, we seem to be directed to the humanity of Christ. By the altars of stone and brass, we appear to be directed to the power and dignity of that nature. And by the altar of gold, we are led to contemplate his supreme divinity, and glorious God-head. Now these altars were of divine appointment, all connected with them was from God. So Jesus is the selected, and the appointed of the Father — his elect, his chosen, in whom his soul delighted. The altar was the place of meeting between the worshipper and God; to this the humble penitent sinner approached, and here God deigned to descend, to manifest his grace and favour. Jesus is ex-

pressly the mediator, the middle man between God and us. In Christ, our nature is exalted to hold communion with God, and in Christ God descends and holds communion with man. We worship God only with acceptance through Jesus Christ, he is the only way, and no man can come to the Father but by him. And in like manner God is in Christ well-pleased with us, and through him our persons and offerings meet with his divine and gracious approbation. To this altar, it is both our duty and privilege to come. Not like the altars of the tabernacle and temple, which were only approached by the priests on certain occasions, to this all believers may approach, being a royal priesthood; they may come at all times and in every place, and they may come with the most blessed assurance of favour and acceptance.

Oct. 24.

CHRIST AN ALTAR.

PART II.—*Heb. xiii. 10.*

THE altar was designed to support the sacrifice which was presented to God. Now the divinity of Jesus was that on which the sacrifice rested—that which gave it all its preciousness and validity. It was this which imparted inexpressible efficacy both to his obedience and death. It was this which

supported him when the waves of sorrow went over his head, and which would assuredly have engulfed any merely created intelligence. The altar not only sustained, but also sanctified the offering: thus the atonement was effected through that sacred and hallowed virtue which the deity of Christ imparted to his death: thus it was that absolute perfection was imparted to Christ's mediation, and thus the attributes of God were glorified, and the work of man's salvation was completed. Let us then inquire as to our connexion with this altar. Have we approached it, exercising faith in the victim offered upon it, and then have we obtained peace and acceptance with God? There is no hope for the sinner elsewhere. Despising this, and our ruin is irrevocable. God will not allow any other altar to be erected. This is designed for the benefit of the universal family of man. The world is now one vast consecrated temple, and the cross is the only altar for its vast and numberless worshippers. It is accessible to all. It has efficacy for all. And all who approach as humble, believing worshippers shall obtain the favour of God, and finally eternal life. All our services, whether of praise, or prayer, or obedience, must be brought and laid on this altar, and can only be accepted through it.

Oct. 25.

CHRIST, THE AUTHOR AND FINISHER
OF OUR FAITH.*The Author and Finisher of our Faith.—Heb. xii. 2.*

JESUS is not only the object of faith placed before us in the gospel, but he is also the source of all that is requisite for the formation of faith in the human heart. The revelation necessary to faith is from him. “No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.” What prophets had previously imperfectly made known, he fully and gloriously brought to light: the system of redemption he clearly unfolded, and made the way to heaven, specific and plain. That which is essential for us to know, in order to our salvation, is that which he both published and declared. He is the head of his Church, the only master and lord of the consciences of his people: He is the author of faith, as it is by his authority the gospel is offered to us: the gospel published is his gospel, the publishers are his called, qualified servants, and all their authority is derived from him. they preach pardon and peace, and eternal life, in Christ’s name. Then also the first act of faith has reference to him: the first glance of the weeping suppliant is directed to him: the first stone of the building rests upon him: the first act of the mind, has direct reference to his saving benefit; and

as faith commences with him, so he carries it on in the soul, his grace gives it power and energy. By the influence of his spirit and truth, fresh discoveries of his love and power, are made known to the mind, so that faith groweth exceedingly. Then the possession of his presence and glory, is the great end of faith: and when Christ is fully enjoyed, faith will finish its career, and the blessedness of sight and fruition, will be the soul's portion for ever. Faith therefore begins with Christ, is carried on by Christ, and is finished by Christ. The language of faith is, none but Christ; Christ in all his benefits, and Christ for ever.

Oct. 26.

CHRIST AN ENSIGN.

An Ensign of the people. — Isaiah xi. 1.

AN ensign is a standard or flag which is hoisted as the rallying point of an army. By the entrance of sin into our world, man became not only an alien, but an enemy to God, and in league with the prince of darkness. Now for this was the Son of God manifested, that he might gather the rebellious outcasts to his banner, so that they might be the consecrated army of the Lord of hosts. Now Jesus as an ensign was lifted up on the cross, expressly, that he might draw all men unto him. Thus, as the brazen serpent was placed in the midst

of the camp, that the dying in every direction might have an equal opportunity of beholding it, and being healed, so Jesus was elevated on Calvary as the sin-atoning victim for a guilty world, that whosoever should believe in him might not perish, but have everlasting life. To this ensign the rebel soldiery are invited, with a full promise of pardon, if their arms of rebellion are thrown down, and if they believingly consecrate themselves to the service of the cross. O yes! many like the infuriated Saul of Tarsus, have cast themselves down here and sued for pardon, and have freely obtained the remission of all their sins, and have become the valiant soldiers of the army of the living God. Jesus is also the ensign, as he is the centre of union to his followers. His disciples possess diversities of gifts, and variety of opinions on the lesser points of faith; and too often have they manifested a want of oneness of spirit and unity of operation, but Jesus is the centre where they all meet. However they may differ from each other, and however divided they may appear in their respective sections, yet are they all one in Christ Jesus. Here they have one common salvation, one blessed lord—possess the same holy spirit, have to wage war against the same common enemies—to wield the same weapons, and finally, to participate of the same glorious reward. Jesus as ensign, is now exalted to the right hand of the majesty on high, and there he receives unto himself, all who

die in the faith, in every part of our world, and to his blessed presence and glory, he will conduct all his victorious troops, that as he overcame and sat down on his Father's throne, so they might also sit down with him on his throne.

Oct. 27.

JESUS THE STRENGTH OF HIS PEOPLE.

The Lord is my strength.—*Psalms* xviii. 14.

THE soul in its natural state is without gracious strength. We have sufficiency of power to do evil, but are totally destitute of ability to love and serve God. It is when we believe in Christ that this power is received. Then Christ imparts unto us that strength which is essential to the christian life and character. We require *standing* strength, so as not to be moved from the hope of the gospel. We can only stand fast in the Lord, — he keeps our feet, so that none of our steps do slide. We require *walking* strength. Religion is a work of holy progression : we must pass on from stage to stage, until the journey is finished, and we appear perfect before the God of gods in Zion. Now as we have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so are we to walk in him. He not only calls upon us to fo-

low him, but gives us ability to do so. We require *labouring* strength. Power to work out our salvation and to labour in his vineyard. In vain we try to labour, unless we are strengthened by his Spirit in the inward man. The builders attempt to build the house in vain, unless the Lord build it. We require *fighting* strength. Enemies must be encountered, and overcome. The christian life is a continued warfare, and we must overcome, and be more than conquerors through him that loved us. We require *suffering* strength. The way to the crown is by the cross, and the cross must be taken up, and it must be borne, and sometimes it is heavy and oppressive. The Lord's gold must pass through the fires that it may be refined, and made fit for his heavenly use. How necessary then is divine strength to uphold, to make us resigned, and holy, and happy. How comfortable is the reflection amid all the vicissitudes of life, that the Lord is our strength.

Oct. 28.

JESUS THE STRENGTH OF HIS PEOPLE.

PART II.—*Psalms* cxviii. 14.

THE people of God not only require strength to be stedfast, to labour, to fight, and to suffer, but

they will require strength especially to *die*. Dying is an unknown, yet tremendous conflict. It is to grapple with an untried adversary, with one who was never foiled or defeated. And so sure as he has been in every age of the world an invincible conqueror, so surely will he conquer us. Yet there is a victory to be obtained by the dying christian over the king of terrors. Thousands have joyfully encountered him, and have passed into eternity, exclaiming, in holy triumph, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." We live in Christ, and by him, and to him—and as we die in Christ, supported by his grace, so that death is not a curse, but a blessing; hence it is mentioned among the chartered privileges of the Lord's people. O yes, the pains of affliction would destroy the christian, were not Christ his strength. The waves of death would overwhelm them, and then heart and flesh would utterly fail, but Christ is the strength of their heart and their portion for ever. How desirable it is that we feel conscious of our own weakness—conscious weakness is real strength, for "when we are weak then we are strong." Let us cultivate a spirit of entire dependance upon Jesus, for without him we can do nothing. And how cheering it is, that in the midst of all our insufficiency, Christ in all his immutable sufficiency is ours, and ours for ever. Then with the greatest confidence may we

exclaim, "We can do all things through Christ strengthening us."

"Thine image Lord bestow,
Thy presence and thy love,
I ask to serve thee here below,
And reign with thee above.

Teach me to live by faith,
Conform my will to thine;
Let me victorious be in death
And then in glory shine."

Oct. 29.

CHRIST OUR SONG.

The Lord is my strength and song.—Psalm cxviii. 14.

GOD never intended that his saints should go on their way to Canaan weeping. The path of the just shineth more and more unto the perfect day. Mourning for sin precedes the enjoyment of religion, but it is invariably turned into joy, "for they that sow in tears shall reap in joy." Though sorrow may endure, while we are encompassed with the darkness of night, yet joy cometh with the light of spiritual day. It is the duty, as well as the privilege of the Lord's people to rejoice in him always, and to be glad in the God of their salvation. Now as Jesus is the strength, so also is

he the song of his people. He calls upon them and inspires them to sing. Hence says the Psalmist, "He hath put a new song into my mouth." And we never sing spiritually and with holy joy, until he hath opened our lips, and inspired our hearts; then our mouths shew forth his praise. Christ is also the subject of our song, and what fullness and variety of topics are presented to our minds, in the character and work of the Redeemer. Believers sing of the dignity and glory of his person, there is none so great and dignified as our Jehovah Jesus. He possesses the fullness of all the divine perfections. Every attribute of Deity, belongs to him, his glory, is that of the only begotten of the father, full of grace and truth. David sang of the excellencies of the amiable Jonathan, but Jesus is the sum of excellency, and infinitely fairer than the sons of men. Believers sing the sweetness of his matchless name. Indeed, every pleasing and joyous appellation belongs to him: but his name, Jesus, has a sort of pre-eminence, on account of its appropriateness to man's state and wants.

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds,
In a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear."

The devout soul feels the force of the poet's lines,
and with holy ardour, sings,—

“Thou dear Redeemer, dying lamb
I love to hear of thee ;
No music, like thy charming name,
Nor half so sweet, can be,”

Oct. 30.

CHRIST OUR SONG.

PART II.—*Ps. cxviii. 14.*

BELIEVERS sing the love of Jesus. No subject has been so often celebrated in song as that of intensity of affection. No instance, however, recorded in the pages of history can be compared to the love of Jesus towards our guilty and perishing world. Yes, whether we consider the object of his affection as being totally unworthy of his regard, or whether we consider the sacrifice he made for it, even the shedding of his own precious blood, it is love unparalleled—love which passeth all understanding—love, so great, so high, so deep, so wide, so long, that none can know it but Deity himself. It is not wonderful, then, that this love should be the subject of the admiration and praise of his redeemed people. Then they also sing of his illustrious achievements in the creation, and in ruling our world : in these they have contemplated the greatness of his wisdom, goodness, and power. But in redemption especially, they see all his former works

outdone. They sing how he has dignified human nature by his incarnation in our flesh: how he has opened a way to the celestial Zion by the discoveries of his gospel. How he hath embodied all that is virtuous in his holy example; how he hath spoiled the powers of darkness by the power of his cross; how he hath destroyed death, and banished the dread gloom of the grave; how he hath ascended on high, and led captivity captive, and received gifts for men; how he ever liveth, as their exalted advocate and great high priest, to make intercession for them. And they sing of his illustrious reign and the glory of his conquests, and of his magnificent second advent, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe.

Oct. 31.

CHRIST OUR SONG.

PART III.—*Ps.* cxviii. 14.

CHRIST has been the song of his people in all generations. Abraham desired to see his day, and by faith he did behold it, and his soul was glad. The ancient prophets delivered many of their predictions in the form of songs, and Jesus was the burden of prophecy, for to him gave all the prophets witness. David, the sweet singer of Israel,

composed a great variety of sacred odes, referring directly to the person, work, and kingdom of Jesus. Angels sung a celestial anthem at his birth, and the church in every age has celebrated her Lord in songs of joy and praise. All the redeemed family in heaven, in concert with the angelic choirs, are constantly crying, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." And the whole redeemed congregation in the heavenly temple shall exalt him in their songs of rapturous exultation, for ever and ever. No song shall survive the conflagration of our world but the song of the Lamb. Let us ascertain whether we feel Jesus to be melodious to our souls or not. Is he the subject of our admiration and praise? Do we delight in the music of his name, and in the wonder of his love? Is he the subject of our morning and evening praise? How vain and trifling will all other songs appear to the spiritually minded christian. Let carnal men sing worldly songs, seeing they are strangers to better and nobler themes; but our songs shall all have respect to him who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and who hath made us kings and priests unto God and the Lamb for ever.

Our Jesus shall be still our theme
While in this world we stay;
We'll sing our Jesu's lovely name,
When all things else decay.

When we appear in yonder cloud,
With all his favour'd throng,
Then we will sing more sweet, more loud.
And Christ shall be our song."

Nov. 1.

JESUS OUR SALVATION.

And is become my Salvation.—Ps. cxviii. 14.

JESUS is not only the Saviour, but he is the soul's salvation. Whatever the spirit of man requires is found in him. Having him, we possess all things. Salvation in all its eternal comprehensiveness, is treasured up in Jesus. The father speaks of him as "his salvation to the ends of the earth." The psalmist says, "He only is my salvation." Isaiah says, "Behold, God is my salvation." And he is directed to tell Zion, "Behold, thy salvation cometh." And Simeon, when he had received Christ into his arms, exclaimed, "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation." In every respect he is the soul's salvation. He is our salvation from guilt, for we have justification in his name. He is our salvation from the tyranny of sin, for if the Son make us free, we are free indeed. He is our salvation from torture and dread, for he says to the believing, contrite sinner, "Go in peace, and sin no more." He is our salvation from moral defilement, being

unto us sanctification, and washing away our stains in his own blood. He is our salvation from the world, by raising us above it, and giving us the believing victory of it. He is our salvation from the flesh; for, being crucified with him, we are dead to the flesh, and live a life of faith on the Son of God. He is our salvation from the power of the devil; for he has delivered us from his enslaving yoke, and has bound the strong man, and spoiled his goods, and cast him out. He is our salvation from death, for he who is our life spiritual, will raise our bodies from the grave, and be to us everlasting life in the world to come. He is our salvation from hell; for Jesus only can deliver us from the wrath to come. He is our present salvation, for we rejoice in his love, exult in his grace, and glory in his cross. He speaks now within us by his spirit, and says, "I am thy salvation". He will be our salvation for ever and will keep what we have entrusted to his care, and finally present our souls complete in that great and awful day. Happy are all they who experimentally feel that "the Lord is become their salvation."

Nov. 2.

JESUS, OUR MASTER.

One is your Master, even Christ.—Mat. xxviii.—8.

PRIDE is a leading feature of the human heart, and it is one of the last things to be removed, even

by the grace of God. Among the apostles of Jesus there was an evident desire for the ascendancy, and pre-eminence. Je us therefore urged humility upon them, as indispensable to the possession of his kingdom ; and forbade every thing which would imply lordship over one another. Hence he said One is your master, and all ye are brethren. Christ is the master of the *conscience*: others may teach us advise us, but the conscience is solely his. His truth must direct it: His grace hallow it: His authority be invariably binding upon it. If he does not condemn our conscience, then we may be perfectly indifferent to the censures of all beside. He is master of our *conduct*. We are to live by the rule he appoints, to obey his commands, keep his ordinances, and walk in his statutes to do them. In every thing we must labour to know his will, that we may cheerfully fulfil it. As our master, he will call us to an *account at the last day*. Yes, at the end of this dispensation, he will reckon with all his servants, and publicly before an assembled world for all that they have done and suffered for his sake. As master, he will *recompense* his servants: He will not be unmindful of our work of faith, and labour of love: he will not forget the least service performed for one of his people. A cup of water given to any one bearing the name of a disciple, shall not lose its reward. He will say to each of his faithful servants, "Well done, enter ye into the joy of your lord". Then shall they receive from his

blessed hands, the crown of glory, that fadeth not away.

“ O That each from his Lord
May receive the glad word,
Well, and faithfully done—
Enter into my joy, and sit down on my Throne.”

Nov. 3.

CHRIST, TYPIFIED BY THE ARK.

An Ark to the saving of his House.—Heb. xi.—7.

THE ark which Noah prepared, and by which he and his house were saved from the flood of waters, strikingly exhibits to us, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Saviour of the world. The ark was of divine origin and construction. The whole was the result of divine design and contrivance. Jesus was also God's gift to the world. Salvation by his obedience and death, resulted entirely from the all-wise, and infinitely gracious designs of God. Jesus too was formed by the mysterious overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, and thus constituted for the glorious work he had to effect. The ark was long preparing, and the coming of Jesus was intimated by prophets, for thousands of years before his glorious advent was announced. The ark was for the salvation of Noah and his house; Jesus for the salvation of all believers, - for the household of his sanctified church.

The ark was a complete instrument of safety ; Jesus is a complete Saviour, able to save to the uttermost, all who come unto God, by him. It was requisite to be within the ark, and none but such, escaped the destroying flood ; so we must be experimentally within Christ, or perish for ever. Those within the ark after being tossed on the waters, rested on Mount Ararat, and they became the inhabitants of the new world—so all who are in Jesus, after enduring the storms of the tempest-wrought sea of life, rest safely on Zion's celestial mount, and become the inhabitants of the heavenly world, for ever and ever. To those thus preserved, God presented the rainbow, as a token that they should not be destroyed by another flood ; in heaven, the inhabitants behold the blessed Jesus, with a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. How happy all they who are thus in Christ. Let the spaciousness of the ark induce us to invite all around us, to hasten into it, that they may escape from the wrath to come.

Nov. 4.

PRECIOUSNESS OF CHRIST

He is precious.—1 Pet. ii. 27.

WHAT an infinity of invaluable matter, is comprehended in this one sentence,—Christ, is precious ! The term precious, signifies that which is rare, and

in this respect, Christ is precious, for as there is only one God, so there is only one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. There are myriads of human spirits, and most likely, thousands of myriads of angels, but there is only one Christ, even Jesus of Nazareth, of whom Moses in the law and the prophets wrote. While we have countless stars, which bespangle the celestial firmament, we have only one sun, the great monarch of day; in like manner, there is only one great orb of spiritual day, Christ, the sun of righteousness, who hath arisen upon our world, with healing beneath his wings. Angels are pure spirits, man is both material and immaterial, Christ possesses in connection with the perfect human nature, all the fullness of the Godhead, and that bodily. Who then can describe the preciousness of this blessed Saviour, the only begotten son of the most high God? As there was but one tree of life in the earthly Paradise, so Jesus is the only spiritual tree of life in the midst of the Paradise of God. The happiness and salvation of the world depends upon this precious Christ. For there is no other name given among men, by which we can be saved. He is the only pearl of great price, and the only hope of a dying world.

Nov. 5.

PRECIOUSNESS OF CHRIST.

PART II.—1 *Pet.* ii. 7

CHRIST is truly and intrinsically precious. All perfections and excellencies are concentrated in him: he is the constellation of beauty. All human traits of loveliness and worth, and all the attributes of divine glory, meet in him. He is the climax of all blessedness, greatness, and dignity. He is the life and felicity of the universe. All existence is derived from him, and supported by him. There is no felicity but what emanates from his own eternal and unchanging blessedness. His light and glory, he diffuses throughout all worlds, and he is the first cause and last end of all things. He is precious in the attributes which essentially belong to him:—Omnipresence, by which he is in every place at the same instant of time, in all, above all, and through all:—Omniscience, by which he has a perfect knowledge of all things, and by which all things are constantly before his discerning eyes:—Omnipotence, by which he can effect all his will, and do every thing he desires to do:—Unchangeableness, by which he is ever of one mind, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, so that his purposes stand fast and change not:—Eternal an existence underived, ever being the alone GREAT I AM. Then there are the moral attributes of his blessed and adorable character.

Inflexibly just : essentially spotless and holy perfectly true, infinitely good, unboundedly gracious, merciful, and compassionate : yea, love itself. The essence of love, and the fountain of love, love immutable, and everlasting.

“His mercies never shall remove,
His nature and his name is love.”

Nov. 6.

PRECIOUSNESS OF CHRIST.

PART II.—1 *Pet.* ii. 7.

CHRIST is precious in his incomparable titles. Consider his *divine* titles ; IMMANUEL, God with us. the true God, the only God, the only wise God, God over all, blessed for ever. Consider too his *royal* titles ; King of Zion, prince of the kings of the earth, king immortal, the only potentate, king of kings, and lord of lords. Consider also his *sacerdotal* or *priestly* titles. He is the priest of God, the great high priest, after the order of Melchizedec. The intercessor, and ever living advocate of his church. Consider his *prophetic* titles. He is the apostle of our profession, the prophet like unto Moses, the prophet of the Most High God : a teacher sent from God, the only one who hath revealed the Father, and brought life and immortality to light, by his gospel. Consider his *martial* titles. He is

the Ensign of his church, the Breaker who goeth before his people, the Captain of the Lord's host, the Captain of salvation, the Conqueror, mighty in battle, whose garments are dyed in the blood of his enemies. Consider his *domestic* and *social titles*. He is the everlasting Father of the christian age, the beloved brother of his disciples, the Bishop and Shepherd of souls, the heavenly Bridegroom, the affectionate counsellor, and the unchanging friend of all who trust in him. Consider also, that he embodies every excellency, which these titles imply, in a perfect degree.

Nov. 7.

PRECIOUSNESS OF CHRIST.

PART IV.—1 *Pet.* ii. 7

IN proceeding to glance at the incomparable titles of Jesus, let us now notice those *typical* appellations by which he is represented. He is the second Adam, the Lord from Heaven. He is our real Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and the builder of the ark of his church. He is our Jacob, the founder of Israel. He is the beloved Joseph, the fruitful bough. He is the great and celebrated Moses, the deliverer of his people and the law-giver of his church. He is the Aaron of his spiritual

tabernacle. He is our mighty and illustrious Joshua, who brings his people into the land of promise. He is David the prince and shepherd of Israel. Solomon the rich and peacable monarch. Jonah, the assuager of the storm. Zerubabel, the builder of the temple of the Lord of Hosts. Then many of the names of distinguished *things and places*, are applied to Jesus. He is our altar and mercy seat. Our true tabernacle, and sacrifice. He is our uplifted healer, as typified by the brazen serpent. Our smitten rock and rock of supplies. Our true heavenly Manna. Our city of refuge. Our paschal lamb, and his gospel proclaims the jubilee of the world. The earth and seas and skies are impoverished to exhibit his character and worth. He is our foundation stone, the rock of our salvation. He is our true vine, the rose of Sharon, and the lilly of the valley. He is the pearl of great price. He is the morning star the day spring and the glorious orb of day. He is the light of the world. The bread of heaven, and the life of all who believe. He is the author of our Faith, our true hope, our salvation and song. Our alpha and omega and our all and in all. And these are but a very imperfect selection of those titles which distinguish the precious Redeemer.

“Join all the glorious names,
Of wisdom, love, and power;
That mortals ever knew,

'That angels ever bore,
All are too mean to speak his worth,
'Too mean to set my Saviour forth.'

Nov. 8.

PRECIOUSNESS OF CHRIST.

PART V.—1 *Pet.* ii. 7.

CHRIST is precious in his *invaluable* benefits. These benefits include all the fulness of infinite mercy, by which iniquity, transgressions, and sins are all blotted out. Unbounded grace, by which all needful blessings and influences are communicated for the spiritual happiness and prosperity of the soul, and all the eternal blessings of glory, by which our felicity and salvation, is irrevocably consummated. Jesus is precious under all circumstances. In prosperity, his grace humbles, and he is all our joy and song. In adversity he is our sympathetic friend who sticketh closer than a brother. In poverty he is our riches, in affliction our consolation, in temptation our deliverer, in death our triumph, in judgment our advocate, and in eternity the object of our unceasing joy and delight. We are provided for by Christ, he feeds and clothes, and strengthens, and heals us. He guides and supports and comforts. He illumines, renders us acceptable, and sanctifies

us by his truth. He transforms us into his likeness, and finally exalts to his kingdom and glory. How many have lived joyfully experiencing the preciousness of Christ, how many have died rapturously, uttering praises to his precious name? how the unnumbered hosts of heaven, are constantly filling the celestial temple with acclamations of joy and praise?

“Weak is the effort of my heart,
And languid are my lays.
But when I see thee as thou art,
I’ll give thee nobler praise.

Till then I would thy love proclaim,
With every fleeting breath;
And may the music of thy name,
Refresh my soul in death.”

Nov. 9.

PRECIOUSNESS OF CHRIST.

PART VI.—1 *Pet.* ii. 7.

LET us now consider the application of Christ’s preciousness to our own hearts. If Christ be precious to us, then shall we love him with holy ardour, and delight in all that relates to his name, and person, and work. Our souls will rejoice to follow his blessed steps, we shall feel ourselves constantly drawn closer and closer to him, by the attractive power of his cross. His word will be the subject

of our constant reading and meditation, we shall esteem it especially, because it testifies of him. His ordinances will be the rejoicing of our hearts, we shall be glad to go up to the house of the Lord. To hold communion with his saints will indeed be our constant pleasure, but to see Jesus, and enjoy his presence,—

“Makes our Paradise,
For where he is, is heaven.”

Then if Christ be precious to us, we shall cheerfully confess him before men, we shall consider,

“’Tis all our business here below,
To cry, Behold the Lamb.”

We shall neither be ashamed of Christ nor of his words. If Christ be precious, we shall be constrained to willing and constant obedience. The love of Jesus will constrain us to live to him, and honour him with our body and soul which are his. Finally, if Christ be precious to us, we shall joyfully anticipate his presence in the world to come. To die, we shall consider to be gain, not loss, seeing that we shall immediately be with Christ, which is far better,—

“I’ll speak the honours of thy name.
With my last lab’ring breath,
And dying clasp thee in my arms,
My joy in life and death.”

Nov. 10.

JESUS, A PRIEST UPON HIS THRONE.

And he shall be a Priest upon his throne.—Zech. vi. 13.

THIS beautiful prophecy obviously refers to the Redeemer, and exhibits him as uniting in himself both the offices of Priest and King. It is said, “He shall sit and rule upon his throne,” exercising his regal authority and power, and he shall also be a “Priest upon his throne” dispensing pardon and mercy, through the medium of the sacrifice he had presented to God. This is strikingly illustrated in the passage where we are reminded that “He is exalted a Prince and Saviour to give repentance unto Israel and forgiveness of sins.” As a Priest, he has offered an acceptable sacrifice, which has fully atoned for human transgression, so that by virtue of it, we may obtain remission of sins. And as a Priest, he hath hallowed the holy place, by sprinkling it with his precious blood, and the throne which would otherwise have been a throne of flaming judgment, is now a throne of grace, where we may “obtain mercy and grace to help in time of need.” And on that throne he sits, expressly to bless and save all who come unto God by him. But still his regal office is maintained, he is a Priest upon a throne, and although it is a throne of grace, yet it is a throne of authority and rule. And this accords with the designs of redeeming grace.

He saves us, that we may be his willing and obedient people in the day of his power. His grace produces a spirit of loyal subjection and cheerful obedience: it does not make men lawless, but lawful, and teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, and righteously, and godly in this present evil world. If we possess genuine piety, then are we delivered both from the curse and influence of sin: then are we both justified and sanctified: then are we both filial children and obedient subjects: then have we faith in Christ's priestly offering, and then also do we cheerfully submit to his sovereign rule.

Nov. 11.

JESUS A PRIEST UPON HIS THRONE.

PART II.—*Zech.* vi. 13.

THE priestly and kingly offices of Christ are inseparably connected. He is not our Lord unless we have believingly sought his priestly blessing: and he is not our Priest, unless we are influenced by his authority and subject to his royal sceptre; and we must ever keep both his offices before our eyes. I am guilty, polluted, and weak, so that I require his forgiving mercy, his renewing influences, and his supporting grace. I am dependant, an intelligent and responsible agent, accountable for all I say and

do, and as such I must respect his authority as supreme. I must rejoice in him as my rightful king, and keep his commandments with pleasure and delight. I must daily depend upon his efficacious sacrifice, and I must submit always to his will and pleasure. I must be ruled by him, as well as saved by him. I must obey him, as well as trust in him. I must call him Lord, as well as Jesus. For he is "a Priest upon his throne." And Oh! what grace he possesses as a Priest! What virtue is contained in the sacrifice he hath offered! How prevalent are his intercessions! How unspeakably precious and invaluable his blessing! And as Lord and King, how equitable are his administrations! His reign, is a reign of clemency and goodness. How happy are his subjects! Dignity, and riches are theirs continually. How bright their prospects! Destined to be kings and priests unto God and the Lamb for ever. Then how powerful are the motives, to unwavering faith in Christ's sacrifice, and to constant subjection, and voluntary and hearty obedience to his royal laws. Let us never forget that Jesus is a Priest, upon his throne.

Nov. 12.

CHRIST, THE ROSE OF SHARON.

I am the Rose of Sharon.—Sol. Song, ii. 1.

NATURE in its universal variety, is inadequate to

set forth the excellency of the Lord Jesus But by the careful study of the metaphors employed, we may form some faint idea of his spiritual beauty, and have a more intimate knowledge of his inestimable qualities. It is said, that Sharon was distinguished for the beauty and abundance of roses, which it yielded, hence Jesus is represented, not merely as a rose, but in his pre-eminence, as the rose of Sharon. The beauty of the rose is universally admitted, and thus it faintly portrays the loveliness of the Redeemer's person. Jesus was infinitely fairer than the sons of men: he must eminently have been the perfection of Jehovah's works, as he was the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person All that was holy, and dignified, and amiable, distinguished the blessed Redeemer. The rose is also celebrated for its fragrance, and thus it sets forth the richness and deliciousness of the communications of Jesus. He is the source of all the joys, and delights of his people: his odours fill his church with the most agreeable and delightful enjoyments; and all the excellencies of his people, and all that renders them acceptable to the Father either as to their persons or services, they derive from Sharon's fragrant rose. Then as the rose, he is the ornament and adorning of his people: he imparts unto them moral and spiritual beauty: he confers upon them true and abiding dignity. By union to him they are daily assimilated into his celestial likeness,

His name as Christ is the fragrance

and become partakers of his heavenly nature. When we go abroad then to behold the wonderful works of God, let our minds ascend from the creature, to the Creator, and especially, let us contemplate those things with spiritual delight, which metaphorically place before us, the loveliness and infinite excellencies of the Lord Jesus.

Nov. 13.

CHRIST THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS.

Great is the Mystery of Godliness,—God manifest in the flesh.—1 Tim. iii. 16.

THE Works of an infinitely wise being, must of necessity to a great extent, be mysterious to finite, and short-sighted creatures. Such are the works of Deity to us, heaven and earth are full of mysteries, wherever we look, whatever we contemplate, we are compelled to exclaim, O the depths of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God? How great and manifold are thy works, O Lord of Hosts! if these remarks apply to the works of nature and equally to the administrations of providence, need we wonder, that they must necessarily include the designs of his mercy and grace. The whole scheme of redemption is full of mystery. The objects of redeeming grace, men, not angels, vile, self ruined, worthless men. The source of

the redeeming plan, the love of God, love so deep so unparalleled, so utterly unfathomable ! And not less mysterious, the person of the redeemer .—"Immanuel God with us." God in human form, dwelling in our flesh, united to our nature. The Lord of Angels, and the eternal Jehovah, yet by the assumption of humanity, the child born, and the son given, the babe of Bethlehem, and afterwards the servant of servants, the man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. Angels, those exalted spirits of intellectual greatness, are lost in wonder and reverent awe. They pass by sun, moon and stars, and gathering around Bethlehem, Calvary, and Olivet, desire to look into the person, and sufferings of Christ and the glory that shall follow. Well might the apostle therefore exclaim, "Great, is the mystery of Godliness, God manifest in the flesh." The facts of this mystery are revealed, and it is our happy privilege to possess that revelation ; by believing these facts, our souls will be made the partakers of all those precious benefits, which Jesus by his sufferings and death hath obtained for us.

Nov. 14.

CHRIST THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS.

PART II.—1 *Tim.* iii. 16.

THE essence of Deity is invisible : no man hath seen God at any time. In the early ages of the

world God revealed his mind in various ways to the patriarchs and prophets. On some occasions, he did so by visions of the night; at other times, by striking symbolical appearances by day. To Moses he appeared in the burning bush, on Sinai, in the smoke and fire, which covered its rugged top; in the desert he appeared in the pillar of cloud and pillar of fire; in the tabernacle and temple, also, there was the cloud of his presence. In Jesus, he gave a full, clear, and glorious manifestation of himself. Jesus was the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person; in Jesus dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily: whosoever saw him, beheld the Father; for the Father and Christ are one. Every perfection of Deity was seen in Christ, and exercised by him. Jehovah's wisdom, power, omniscience, omnipresence, truth, holiness, goodness, and unchangeableness, were manifested by him. And yet, though we have the fullest evidence of this truth, who can understand it? How high above all the flights of the human imagination! How deeply profound, below all that we can fathom! And yet, what a fountain of blessedness is presented to us in this mystery of mysteries!

“ But God, made flesh, is wholly ours,
And asks our noblest strain;
The Father of celestial powers;
The friend of earth-born man.”

This blessed mystery is the most dignified study

of man. Incomprehensible as its heights and breadths, and lengths may be, yet, by spiritual industry, and mental labour, we may know more of it, and our knowledge may be more clear and consolidatory, and we may grow in it daily, until we are filled with the fulness of God. And whatever created spirits are capable of understanding, and what we do not know now, we shall assuredly know hereafter,

When hope in full fruition's lost,
And faith exchange'd for sight.

Nov. 15.

CHRIST, JUSTIFIED IN THE SPIRIT.

Justified in the Spirit.—*Tim.* iii. 16.

THIS is the second link in this precious mysterious chain, that Jesus, was justified in, or by the Spirit. Christ made great and glorious pretensions. He professed to be the Messiah, the world's long expected Saviour, and the Divine Son of God. These claims of Jesus were rejected: they treated him as an impostor: they ascribed his miracles to Satanic influence, and they considered these claims of Jesus, to involve him in the guilt of blasphemy, and as such, they put him to death. But Christ was fully justified by the spirit. The spirit, which fashioned him in the womb of the virgin, rendered his nature sinless, and incapable of moral pollution; and he

possessed that spirit in all its blessed plenitude through the whole of his ministerial life, for it was given not by measure to him, but rested as it were bodily upon him. All his discourses were therefore delivered under the influence of that spirit, and the purity, majesty and power of those discourses, justified Jesus, from the vile aspersions of the Jews. Then the spirit justified him by the miracles which he wrought. These were so striking, so numerous, and so gracious, that one of the rulers frankly confessed, that they knew he was a teacher sent from God, and that no man could do the miracles which he did, were not God with him.—*John*, 3-2. But the spirit fully vindicated him from all the calumnies of his enemies, by his resurrection from the dead. They put him to death as an impostor, as such, they expected he would remain the inhabitant of the sepulchre. They sealed the stone at its mouth. Had it carefully watched, that his disciples might not remove him. Yet, despite of all, on the morning of the third day, the stone was rolled away, the guard fell as dead men, the earthquake shook the whole vicinity of the tomb, Angels ministered, and Jesus arose from the dead, with power and glory. Thus then is he proved beyond all controversy, to be the true Son of God — the Messiah of the world. And the spirit afterwards rested upon those men who were to preach this risen Saviour, and made that Gospel the power of God to Salvation, to thousands of immortal believing souls.

Nov. 16.

JESUS SEEN OF ANGELS.

Seen of Angels.—I. Tim. iii. 16.

THE whole mission of Jesus was associated with the ministry of angels. They had to do with every part of his work and life,—they announced his conception and gave his name to Joseph — they sung a celestial anthem, and caused Bethlehem's plain to resound with joy at his birth,—they guided him into Egypt that he might avoid the murderous decree of Herod, and afterwards watched him on his return to his own country,—they were witnesses of the whole conflict which he had with the Devil in the wilderness, and after he had achieved the victory they ministered unto him. We cannot suppose that Jesus was ever alone, doubtless they watched every step in his illustrious and benevolent career. After the mysterious and unparalleled sufferings in Gethsemane, an angel appeared, and strengthened him. They saw, and ministered to him at his resurrection, one rolled away the stone, and two were witnessed by the disciples, in shining raiment, who declared that he was not there, but risen, and asked why they sought the living among the dead. And when he stood on the summit of Olivet, they saw him as he blessed his disciples, and doubtless formed his royal train as he ascended to his glorious throne. The Poet has beautifully embodied these sentiments where he sings,—

“Through all his travels here below,
They did his steps attend,
Oft wondering how and where at length
This scene of love would end.

They saw his heart transfix'd with wounds
With love and grief run o'er;
They saw him break the bars of death,
Which none e'er broke before.

They brought his chariot from above
To bear him to his throne,
Clapp'd their triumphant wings and cried—
The glorious work is done !”

Nov. 17.

CHRIST PREACHED UNTO THE GENTILES.

Preached unto the Gentiles.—1 Tim. iii. 16.

THE Jews imagined that they were ever to remain the peculiar people of God. Nothing, therefore, was more utterly opposed to their feelings than that the Gentiles should be raised to an equality with themselves. Some of the apostles found it difficult to receive it, and even Peter had to be impressed by a vision, before he could cordially believe that the Gentiles were to be made joint-participants of the grace of life. Yet, so had God purposed, and so had the prophets foretold, that Christ should

be preached unto the Gentiles. It had been predicted by Isaiah, that Christ should be given "for a light to the Gentiles;" and Jehovah had said, that "he should be his salvation to the end of the earth" (Isaiah xlix. 6.). Jesus also had commissioned his apostles to preach the gospel in all the world, and to every creature. And he said after his resurrection to two of his disciples, "thus it was written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead, that repentance and remission of sins should be preached to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." The infatuated Jews continued to reject the Messiah, and despised his gospel, and thus by their unbelief, ceased to be the Lord's peculiar people; then it was that the gates of salvation were thrown wide open to all the nations of the earth, and to every child of man. Thus salvation was sent unto the Gentiles. And how we ought to rejoice in this blessed and glorious arrangement. By this our nation, which was once one of the darkest and vilest spots on earth, has been visited by the heralds of the word of life. And thus have we been rescued from the rudest barbarism, and elevated to the highest eminence of intellectual happiness and glory. Yes, the gospel has been preached to the Gentiles, and hundreds of thousands have heard, believed, and have been saved by it. And the gospel of Christ shall be preached among all the nations of the earth, before the end come. The period also shall arrive, when the poor

infatuated unbelieving children of Abrahams, shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and mourn, and confess Jesus, and be blessed in him. Then shall there be one fold for Jew and Gentile, and their name shall be one, and Jesus shall be all and in all. Even so, O Lord, hasten it in thy time, Amen !

Nov. 18.

CHRIST BELIEVED UPON IN THE WORLD.

Believed on in the world.—1 *Tim.* iii. 16.

As Jesus was rejected by the Jews, and then preached unto the Gentiles, so the Gentile world received the gospel, and thus Christ was believed on in the world. In Judea where he had lived, and taught, and wrought his astounding miracles, he was despised and set at nought — his own received him not. But in the Gentile world, where he had never been seen, and where he had wrought no miracles, the message of salvation came with power to the consciences of thousands. And it is a great mystery, that Christ should be thus believed upon in the world. For they preached him as a crucified Saviour, and to the wise of the world, this was foolishness. It was marvellous that they should abandon splendid and luxurious form of religious

ceremonies, for the simple and unadorned truths of the gospel of Christ, especially when the great leading doctrine, required implicit faith and trust in a reputed malefactor. Then Christ's religion is emphatically pure, and opposed to all the vices which the various forms of paganism sanctioned, so that they would have to renounce all their carnal delights, to cease to live after the flesh, and to be crucified to the world, and the world crucified unto them. But this also they did; they evidently believed in Jesus, and were crucified with him; so that they lived a life of faith in him, who had loved and given himself for them. Although the apostles who made known Christ, were plain and poor men, without power or riches, and most of them illiterate, yet they heard their message, and believed their report. And this applied to all places where the gospel was made known. Wherever the cross was erected, men felt its attractive power, and believed in Jesus. In idolatrous Athens, in intellectual Corinth, and at imperial Rome, were found the sincere disciples of the Lord Jesus. Men of all ranks and stations, were subjugated by the power of the truth, and made wise to eternal life. Dear reader, have you thus believed in Christ? Without faith in him you cannot be saved. You must remain the objects of his Divine displeasure, and finally be the victims of his eternal wrath. Cordially embrace the Saviour, and you will be happy and saved for ever. Let believers rejoice, and

glory in nothing, save in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Nov. 19.

CHRIST RECEIVED INTO GLORY.

Received up into glory.—1 Tim. iii. 16.

THIS is the last link in this chain of holy mysteries. The despised, condemned, and crucified Jesus, who was deemed a deceiver of men, and unfit to live, was approved of God, raised from the dead, and finally exalted to glory. This reception of Jesus to glory, occurred as he stood on Olivet, and while he was blessing his disciples. For as he blessed them, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight. The glory to which he was received, was the glory of dignity and majesty, and power, which he had with the Father before the world was. It was the glory of that palace, which had been his royal residence during all the ages of eternity. The glory of that crown, which had irradiated his sacred head, as the prince of the kings of the earth, and universal Lord of all: — the glory of that throne, which is above every throne, and which abideth for ever and ever:—the glory of that worship and homage which the myriads of the hosts of heaven are constantly yielding to him, as their Lord and their God. It was the glory of vic-

tory after he had overcome his foes, and spoiled principalities and powers:—the glory of celestial joy and felicity, after the griefs and sorrows of a humiliating life, and a shameful and ignominious death. And into this glory he entered. Into this glory he was publicly received. Angels ministered to his reception, and cried “Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.” And the Father received his illustrious and well-beloved Son, and said unto him, “Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.”

Thus Christ was highly exalted, and received a name which is above every name; and was crowned with glory and honour. In the possession of this glory, Jesus now lives and reigns, and shall do so for ever and ever.

“Beyond the glittering starry skies,
Far as th’ eternal hills,
There in the boundless worlds of light,
Our dear Redeemer dwells.

Bright angels, strike your loudest strings,
Your sweetest voices raise;
Let heav’n and all created things,
Sound our Immanuel’s praise.”

Nov. 20.

CHRIST THE ETERNAL LIFE.

Eternal life.—1 John v. 20.

THE beloved disciple informs us, in the eleventh verse of this chapter, that God hath given to us eternal life, and that this “life is in his Son.” But in the verse from which the text of this exercise is selected, he expresses it still more emphatically. — “this is the true God, and eternal life.” Every thing relating to eternal life is essentially connected with Jesus Christ. He has given us the only clear and full revelation of it, in his blessed gospel. He has made known unto us the sure way to its glorious possession. He has published it as the great blessing which he came to confer on a dying world. And he assures us that all who believe him shall have everlasting life. But every thing connected with eternal life is inseparably identified with Christ. The place of its enjoyment is the house of his heavenly Father, which he ascended to prepare for us; and where he dwells; to which also he receives all his people; that where he is they may be also. So that to possess eternal life, is to be with Christ — to be “for ever with the Lord.” The glory conferred upon the inheritors of eternal life is Christ’s glory. They are glorified with Jesus, and partake of the same glory which he possesses; for, addressing his Father, he says, “the glory which

thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, as we are one" (John xvii. 22.) Glorified saints are said to wear crowns, and to sit upon thrones, and to be clothed in white robes. Now these crowns are given by Jesus. The apostle reminds us that Christ, the righteous judge, would not only give him a crown of righteousness, but also to all them who love his appearing. (1 Tim. iv. 8.) Jesus saith, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give a crown of life." The throne on which they sit is his throne. — "He that overcometh shall sit down with me on my throne," (Rev. iii. 21.) And the robes they wear have been washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. How obvious then that this Jesus is eternal life.

Nov. 21.

CHRIST THE ETERNAL LIFE

PART II.—*John v. 20.*

HEAVENLY felicity is sometimes represented as consisting in delightful visions. Of these visions, Jesus is invariably the object which is to be beheld. Job anticipated seeing God, his living Redeemer. The Psalmist speaks of awaking in his likeness, and being satisfied. Isaiah predicts that we shall "see the King in his beauty." The apostle says, "we shall see him as he is."

“ There we shall see his face,
And never never sin ;
And from the rivers of his grace
Drink endless pleasures in.”

Yes, eternal ages will be spent in gazing upon the uncreated beauties of the Lamb who sitteth upon the throne for ever and ever. The service of heaven is the service of the Lamb. Before him all the hosts of heaven fall, and worship, and adore. His name forms the theme of all their anthems of praise ; and in the resplendent rays of his glorious countenance they bask with infinite delight. If heaven is Paradise, then Jesus is the tree of life, in the midst thereof. Is it a temple ; then he is the glory of it. Is it a world of light and splendour ; that light is not derived from the sun or moon ; for the “ Lamb is the light thereof.” The enjoyment of eternal life, is the enjoyment of Christ. The full possession of his glorious image, and the rich effusions of his love and favor. As he is the sum of bliss, so his immutability will render it unchangeable, and his own eternity will be the date of their felicity. They shall live with him, see him, and be like him, and enjoy him for ever. Because he lives, they shall live also. By receiving Christ now, we receive the promise, the pledge, and the first fruits of eternal life. For “ Jesus is the true God and eternal life.”

Nov. 22.

CHRIST A DIVINE TEACHER.

We know that thou art a teacher come from God.—

John iii. 2.

SUCH was the address of Nicodemus to Christ. The Jews professedly despised Christ, and treated him as an impostor, but we know not how to account for an infatuation so deep, as that which blinded them to the astounding miracles wrought by Jesus. Nicodemus frankly confesses, "No man" says he, "could do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." In meditating upon Christ as a Divine Teacher, let us briefly notice the nature of his instructions. His instructions were greatly diversified, and embraced a rich variety of subjects. He revealed the true and proper character of the Deity; no man had ever seen Jehovah, but his Son fully declared him. And how gracious and benignant is the description he gave of him. He exhibited him as the bountiful Father of all his creatures, and as the merciful and compassionate God of a fallen and guilty world. He often referred to him as the fountain of pity, and as the source of goodness and love. He explained and illustrated the doctrines of providence. Referred to the benevolent rule of his heavenly Father. Stated his care for the welfare of all his creatures, so that a sparrow could not fall to the ground without

his notice. And he affirmed in reference to the Lord's children, that they should be free from all anxiety, seeing that as their Father clothed the lilies, and fed the fowls of heaven, he would more assuredly feed and clothe them, and declared that the very hairs of their head were all numbered. He exposed the depravity of the human heart. By the most solemn declarations, and the most striking figures, he set forth its vileness and misery. He exhibited also the great and blessed means of recovery, which God had provided. He enforced repentance towards God, and faith in the testimony and mission of himself. He insisted on a total renewal of the soul, complete regeneration, involving the change of heart by the Spirit of God, and the washing of the body in the waters of baptism. (John iii. 5.) He also published a new code of laws for the regulation of his disciples, involving the exercise of mercy and goodness towards all men, and extending to every thought and purpose of the heart towards God.

Nov. 23.

CHRIST A DIVINE TEACHER.

PART II.—*John iii. 2.*

THE instructions of Jesus were all of great and supreme importance. The Jewish Rabbies were

constantly engaged in giving their own glosses to the law, and in enforcing their own conceits, and wild and unmeaning theories upon the people. Jesus on the other hand taught them the will of God, and all that related to their present dignity and happiness, and their future welfare and salvation. His instructions were also of universal and individual concern. He was emphatically the teacher of all classes. All stood in need of his instructions; and his addresses were adapted to all. He came to be the teacher of all men. His truths were so truly sublime, that the loftiest intellect must have been astonished at his words and doctrines; and yet the mode of instruction he adopted, was so plain, that a wayfaring man, though a fool, could not err therein. Hence it is written, "the common people heard him gladly." His instructions were of eternal consequence:—they were not speculations merely to astonish or amaze; but truths essentially connected with man's present and eternal salvation:—truths, which, if rejected, must subject the soul to the righteous displeasure of God, and all the miseries of the second death. What responsibilities are connected then with having Christ as our teacher. If under the law, he who despised the instructions of Moses, was deemed worthy of death, of how much sorer punishment shall they be thought worthy, who despise the Son of God, and reject the sacred truths of the everlasting gospel. As a teacher, Christ came clothed

with Divine authority. Belief in his message, and subjection to his laws, he implicitly demanded; to the believer he promised everlasting life: of those who unbelievably rejected him, he declared that they were condemned already, and that the wrath of God abode upon them (John iii. 36.).

Nov. 24.

CHRIST A DIVINE TEACHER.

PART III.—*John iii. 2.*

CHRIST's manner of teaching, is worthy of serious and particular attention. His instructions were distinguished for plainness and simplicity; hence the most profound truths were often rendered easy and familiar, by the parabolical mode of teaching which he adopted. And his figures were always exactly suited to the character and capacities of those whom he addressed. Hence, surrounded by the beauties of nature, he spake of the lilies, the vine, the fig-tree, and the sower. By the sea side, he discoursed concerning the net, and the gospel fishermen. He adopted the most familiar domestic events and applied them, such as the woman losing the piece of silver, and the parable of the leaven and the meal. His kingdom he likened to a householder, to a marriage feast, and to a vineyard. He illustrated God's readiness to save, and his

delight in exercising mercy, in the parables of the lost sheep, and in the affecting description of the prodigal's return and reception. Hence the people were captivated with his discourses, and often forgot the demands of nature, following him from place to place, until more than once, he had miraculously to provide bread for the fainting multitudes who surrounded him. His condescension also was equally remarkable; he stooped to the poorest and the vilest; he addressed profligates, publicans, and harlots. Wherever he saw ignorance, he diffused the light of his truth; and wherever he observed sin and wretchedness, he offered the balsam of his grace. As a teacher, he was also patient and tender. How he bore with the dulness of his own disciples! how tenderly he addressed the wretched and malignant Pharisees! Despite of their incorrigibleness, when he contemplated the doom of their city, he wept over it. He ever shewed that his bowels yearned with compassion and love towards his vilest enemies. Goodness and mercy were conspicuous in all he said, as well as in all he did. Never man spake like this man.

Nov. 25.

CHRIST A DIVINE TEACHER.

PART IV.—*John* iii. 2.

JESUS as a teacher, was distinguished for his truth and fidelity. Though tender and affectionate, yet he was faithful to all persons, and in all things he exemplified perfectly that blessed precept, “speaking the truth in love.” He loved souls too well to allow their errors to be undiscovered, and their sins to pass unreprieved. He was the truth itself, and all his sayings were righteous, faithful, and true. He spoke the whole truth to persons of all classes, he courted no applause, he feared no frowns, he never calculated as to human consequences, but as God’s servant, he always did those things acceptable to the Father. As a teacher Jesus also was distinguished for his unwearied constancy and perseverance. He indeed was “instant in season and out of season.” Places, times, and circumstances, affected him not. Whether it was in the temple or in the synagogue, in the city or in the village, by the sea shore, on the way-side or on the mountain top, in all places he was ready to diffuse knowledge, and to teach men the way of salvation. All places he consecrated by his presence, and hallowed by his instructions and blessing. He cared not whether it was morning, noon, or evening; whether it was sabbath or any other day, whether

the hearers were poor fishermen, or learned lawyers and scribes, it was his delight, his meat and drink, to publish the will of God to his creatures. His life and labour were inseparably joined together; he went incessantly forward, until he could appeal to his Father and say, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." What a model for the christian ministry! What an example for the study, and public imitation of all his disciples! How necessary that we look unto Jesus always, that by the daily contemplation of his character, we may be increasingly conformed to his blessed image.

"No matter how dull the scholar whom he
Takes into his school, and gives him to see;
A wonderful method of teaching he hath,
And wise to salvation he makes us thro' faith.

The wayfaring men, tho' fools, need not stray,
His method so plain, so easy his way,
The simplest believer his promise may prove,
And drink of the river of Jesus's love."

Nov. 26.

CHRIST A DIVINE TEACHER.

PART V.—*John iii. 2.*

CHRIST was not only a teacher, but a divine teacher — one evidently sent from God. As such he was announced by the Baptist; for John acted

as his herald, prepared his way, and then pointed the people to him as the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world. His divinity was attested at his baptism, when the heavens were opened, as the Holy Ghost descended, and the voice was heard from the excellent glory, "this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." His doctrines bore the impression of divinity upon them. The clearness, the fulness, and the glory of the truth he uttered; and the authority and power with which he spoke; shewed that he was a teacher sent from God. Then there was the purity of his doctrine, the benevolence which he constantly enforced, and the power which accompanied the statements he delivered. There was also the miracles with which they were connected. He did what no other teacher ever did. He healed all manner of sicknesses, expelled devils, raised the dead, allayed tempests, and stilled by his own omnific voice the stormy seas. And all these things he effected by his own power. God would never have given his divine power to the attestation of an impostor; and thus, by these clear, and numerous, and striking signs was he approved the Son of God. His own resurrection also still further established his divine claims. On this, in fact, rested all the pretensions he had advanced to the Messiahship; and by his resurrection he was proved to be the Son of God with power. Have we received Jesus as the sent of the Father? — with reverence, humbly, in faith,

and in love; have we sat at his feet, and received him? For God speaketh to us, and enjoins the command by his great authority, "hear ye him." He that heareth shall live, and he that refuseth to hearken, shall surely die.

Nov. 27.

OUR DUTY TO CHRIST AS A DIVINE TEACHER.

PART VI.—*John* iii. 2.

CONSIDERING Jesus as a Divine teacher, we should cultivate the greatest reverence for his person. However he may condescend to us, yet never let us be guilty of assuming an unbecoming familiarity towards him. The meek and lovely Jesus is worshipped and feared, with profoundest humility, by all the myriads of intelligencies who dwell before his throne. We should also receive his instructions with grateful affection. We cannot slight him more than by neglecting to avail ourselves of the lessons he imparts. Indifference pours contempt upon him. Affectionate attention will render us acceptable to him, and well pleasing in his sight. He invites us to learn of him; how gratefully should we obey this gracious direction. As our teacher we should listen to him with unabating constancy.

We need to be learning his will daily. Our situation should ever be at his feet. From him we should derive all our spiritual knowledge. He only is our Master : — however gifted and exalted some of our fellows may be, we are not to call them Rabbi, for “one is our Master, even Christ.” We should also remember, that Christ’s instructions are all binding and authoritative, we cannot refuse any of his truths, without incurring his displeasure. We must therefore receive the whole truth as it is in Jesus. And we must buy it and sell it not. And the great end of all is, that we may embody Christ’s instructions in our lives. We must learn that we may practice. If we know these things, happy are we if we do them. We are not to be forgetful hearers, but doers of the word, and then we shall be blessed in our deed. Let us recommend this Divine and heavenly teacher to our ignorant fellow men. Let us extol his perfections, speak of his condescension and grace, and urge men to come unto him, that they may receive the word of eternal life. Blessed are they who dwell in his house, for they will be still praising him.

Nov. 28.

CHRIST’S ODORIFEROUS NAME.

Thy name is as ointment poured forth.— Song i. 3.

THE ointments prepared from the spices of the East, were greatly celebrated for their sweet and

fragrant perfume. They were counted exceedingly valuable, and sold at a very high price. Hence it is said of the instance recorded by the evangelists of the woman who came to Jesus, and anointed him with a box of precious ointment of spikenard, that it was worth three hundred pence, or about ten pounds of our money. The name of Jesus is indescribably precious, and its fragranciness is indeed, as ointment poured forth. Is it not so to the mourning inquirer after salvation? Nothing can cheer, nothing satisfy, until the fragrant name of Christ is experienced.

“Tis Jesu's name that charms our fears,
That bids our sorrows cease,
'Tis music in the sinner's ears,
'Tis life, and health, and peace.”

Is not his name as ointment poured forth, to the afflicted, tempted soul? When fears surround us, and we feel ourselves sinking, it is only when he appears, that we are encouraged, and our souls are preserved from wretchedness and despair.

“In darkest shades if he appear,
Our dawning is begun,
He is our soul's bright morning star,
And he our rising sun.”

And in death, what can cheer us, but his refreshing name? Then, when all other sounds fail, the melodious accents of his name will be our joy and life in death.

“ His name shall dwell upon our hearts
And shed its fragrance there,
The only balm of all our wounds,
The cordial of our fear.

“ We'll speak the honours of his name,
With our last lab'ring breath,
Then speechless clasp him in our arms,
The antidote of death.”

Nov. 29.

CHRIST'S FAVORED DISCIPLE.

Leaning on Jesus' bosom.—John xiii. 23.

JOHN was the youngest of Christ's disciples, and seems to have been distinguished over all the rest, for the amiableness and affection of his temper and disposition. He was evidently a favorite of Christ, and was designated the beloved disciple; he was one of the three, who was with Christ on the mount of transfiguration — when the daughter of Jairus was raised — also during the agony in the garden. If he did forsake Christ during the panic with which they were seized at his apprehension, he was the first to rally again; for it is recorded of him that he stood near the cross of Jesus, and received from him the charge of his weeping and afflicted mother. But previous to this, when Jesus was eating the passover with his disciples, John sat next his Lord, and was allowed the honor and happiness

of leaning on his bosom. This was a situation indicating mutual affection. And doubtless John did love Jesus with all his heart, and we are quite certain John had a high place in the estimation of Christ. And is not this Christianity? to be beloved of Christ, to realize our interest in his regards, and to love him supremely in return! It also indicated confidential complacency and delight. Leaning, seems to be expressive of confidence; and to lean on the bosom of a friend, seems to represent that confidence to be of the most delightful character. And doubtless, John did repose his soul's entire confidence in Jesus. And what is Christianity, but to trust implicitly in the Son of God? -- to roll all our soul's care upon him, as an unchanging friend, and everlasting Redeemer. John's situation seemed to indicate fellowship and sympathy. Ah! who can tell what was agitating that bosom on which John leaned. At this very time, it was heaving with bitter emotion, on account of the treachery of Judas; it was drinking, by anticipation, of that dread cup, which was about to be placed to his sacred lips. And true religion includes fellowship and sympathy with Jesus. We must realise a kindredness of soul, for he that is joined to the Lord, is one spirit. It is necessary that we know the "fellowship of his sufferings," and John himself said, "truly our fellowship is with the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ."

Nov. 30.

CHRIST THE KING IN HIS BEAUTY.

The King in his beauty.—Isaiah xxxiii. 17.

JESUS said to Pilate, thou sayest truly, I am a king. And who can contemplate Christ's regal character, without exultation and delight. His glory is underived, universal, and eternal; his dominion extends throughout the universe, over all worlds. But the prophet speaks of his beauty. And if beauty consists of an assemblage of agreeable graces, then Jesus is the perfection, the model of beauty. All graces adorn his mind, all excellencies distinguish his character. As in the rainbow, there is the combination of beautiful colors; so in Jesus, all that is lovely and soul charming is concentrated. What meekness, what gentleness, what goodness, and what compassion distinguish the Prince of Peace! All that is holy, all that is wise, all that is benignant, and all that is sweet and gracious, dwells in his divine and glorious mind. He is infinitely fairer than the sons of men. Angels captivated with his charms, and glorified spirits sing,

“ Lord ! tis an infinite delight,
To see thy lovely face,
To dwell whole ages in thy sight,
And feel thy vital rays.”

Of Moses it is said, that he was exceedingly fair and lovely in his person, but a greater than Moses

is here. Yea, could all that is interesting and pleasing, be abstracted from all the excellent men who have dwelt upon earth, and all the celestial spirits of heaven, we should only behold so many faint rays, which had been reflected from the infinite beauties of the Saviour's lovely face. And the believer has the promise, that he shall see the King in his beauty. He does so by faith now. Now, there is no name so sweet, no object so lovely to his soul. But if faithful to death, he shall have a glorious vision of Christ, he shall see him as he is, and bask in the refulgent beams of his glory for ever and ever.

“The King's mysterious Deity,
We soon with open face shall see,
The beatific sight;
Shall fill heaven's sounding courts with praise,
And wide diffuse the golden blaze,
Of everlasting light.”

Dec. 1.

CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE.

Leaving us an example. — 1 Pet. ii. 21.

JESUS not only came to teach men the doctrine of the gospel, and to give them a code of spiritual laws, but he came to exhibit in himself that spirit and conduct, which it would be both our duty and advantage to imitate. His life expounded his discourses, and his discourses were but so many

statements of the conduct which he displayed. He is eminently therefore the christian's example, and we are called upon to embody the same principles, and to follow his steps. Let us consider the blessed Jesus in the example he hath left, as to the *government of himself*. How meek in spirit, how careful in speech, how temperate in his habits! In patience and happy contentment, he kept his soul continually. He never manifested any unseemingly wrath, was a total stranger to malignity, never evinced a spirit of resentment, but was constantly calm, and tender, and mild. His humility too was very striking; he sought not great things for himself; he refused to be made a temporal prince, and sought not the applause or sounding titles of men. Often he charged those he had healed to be silent, that he might not be annoyed with the applaudits of the people. Is Jesus our example in this respect? Do we endeavour to govern ourselves by this model? Are we careful over our spirits, and speech, and conduct? Are we temperate, contented, and meek, and lowly of heart? Do we avoid envious, wrathful, censorious, and malignant dispositions and tempers? Are we like minded with the blessed Jesus in these things? Careful examination will enable us to judge rightly of ourselves, and let us constantly feel impressed with the necessity of imitating our Divine Lord, who hath left us an example, that we should follow his steps.

Dec. 2.

CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE.

PART II.—1 *Pet.* ii. 21.

As Jesus is our example in the self government he displayed, so also in his *conduct* towards his *heavenly Father*. It is clear that he set the Father constantly before him. That he ever acted as in his immediate presence. He always aimed at pleasing him in all things. Hence how he constantly spake of his Father. He honored him by his conversation; he ever referred to his glorious attributes and works in his discourses. In short, he made it his business to glorify his Father. To him he gave thanks, eating the provisions of his providence. To him he often lifted his eyes with adoring confidence, when working his astounding miracles. After days of toil, he often spent whole nights with him, in sweet and hallowed meditation and prayer. He glorified him in all his engagements, trusted in him at all times, and died, committing his spirit into his hands. The love of God was in his heart, and therefore none of his steps did slide. Do we imitate the Redeemer in his conduct towards his Father? Do we thus honor, reverence, and worship him? Do we set the Lord before us, and are we in his fear all the day long? Is it our meat and drink to do his will, and to glorify him before men? Do we thankfully receive his mercies,

believingly trust in him at all times, and in all things by prayer and supplication, make known to him all our wants? Do we endeavor to exalt him both by heart and lip, and life? Do we enjoy his heavenly smile, and can we rejoice that we are always anxious to do the things with which he will be pleased. For Jesus in this respect has left us an example, that we should follow his steps

Dec. 3.

CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE.

PART III.—1 *Pet.* ii. 21.

LET us now take a brief survey of the conduct of Jesus towards *mankind*, for in this respect he hath left us an example that we should follow his steps. Towards the civil powers and the authorities of the day, he manifested respect and honor, yielded proper homage, and paid all usual custom and tribute. Hence he wrought a miracle for the very purpose of paying one of the taxes of the day, and he expressly enjoined that the things of Cæsar should be rendered unto Cæsar. Towards all men he manifested honor and respect. To the wicked he displayed unbounded mercy and compassion, and entreated them to flee from the wrath to come. Over the infatuated and self deceived Pharisees, he wept, and solemnly warned them of the inevitable

consequences of their self righteousness and hypocrisy. His heart melted with tenderness over broken hearted penitents; these he cordially received, and blessed them with his pardoning mercy and adopting love. Towards his enemies and vile persecutors, he ever displayed longsuffering and pity. He railed not again, but he compassionated them, employed his dying breath in supplicating their pardon. And how affectionate and tender he was to his disciples! How he bore with all their weaknesses and infirmities! How he pleaded that they might go away, when he was arrested in the garden! He died with them in his heart, and when he arose and met with them, renewed his friendship, and breathed peace upon them; he ascended while blessing them, and then he sent them the Holy Spirit, to guide, to comfort, and lead them into all truth. Do we imitate Jesus in our conduct towards mankind? Do we render honor to whom it is due? Do we love all men, and feel compassion even to our enemies? Are we devotedly attached to the friends of Jesus, and do we love them with pure hearts fervently? In all our transactions with men on earth, let us keep Christ's example before our eyes, and cheerfully and constantly walk in his steps.

Dec. 4.

CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE.

PART IV.—1 *Pet.* ii. 21.

IN following Christ's example, we have before us a model which is perfect; therefore in imitating him, we cannot possibly err. All the other models of Scripture are models of fallible and frail men; Christ's life exhibited no weakness or infirmity, therefore we may safely follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. To follow Christ's example, we must *possess his spirit*. We must be like minded with Christ, there must be a harmony of soul, and kindredness of spirit. The unrenewed mind cannot savour the things which are Christ's. How necessary then that we seek to possess largely of the spirit of Christ. We must live in this spirit and walk in this spirit, and this spirit must sanctify us wholly, and lead us into all truth. To imitate Jesus, we must constantly be receiving the *aids of his grace*. Without this we can do nothing. He must draw us, and then we shall run after him: he must hold us up, and then we shall be safe; he must keep, and then we cannot perish, neither can any pluck us out of his hands. In imitating Jesus, we must do all to *his glory*. We must always seek the exaltation of his blessed name. We must aim at glorifying him both in body and soul which are his. In imitating Jesus, we shall be more and

more assimilated to his likeness, our fellowship with him will be more intimate and sweet, our desires will be more heavenly and strong, and we shall be increasingly meet for his kingdom and glory.

“Be thou my pattern ! make me bear,
More of thy gracious image here ;
Then God the judge shall own my name,
Amongst the followers of the Lamb.”

Dec. 5.

LOVE TO CHRIST.

Lovest thou me.—John xxi. 17.

THE Saviour's address to Peter, may with the greatest propriety, be put to all who bear his name and profess to be his disciples. In every system there are some principles which are essential, and love to Jesus is indispensable to the existence of true religion. He who loveth not Christ, is not known of him, and cannot possibly be an object of his approval. If love to Jesus be therefore a vital, essential matter, how necessary that we ascertain as to its existence in our hearts. Endeavour then to feel the force of the question, “Lovest thou me?” and rest not until you can sincerely reply, yea Lord thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee. And surely this is not a very difficult question to answer. We imagine no point can be

more easily settled than this. For if we love Jesus it must be known to us. We cannot possibly be strangers to the existence of so lively and warm an emotion as that of genuine love. If we love him, our hearts will be set upon him, — he will hold a prominent place in all our feelings and desires. Our wishes will be constantly going out after him. We shall delight in him with all our hearts, and he will be the joy, and rejoicing of our souls. If we love him, our mouths will declare it. From the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, so that his name, and person, and offices, and work, will form the theme of our conversation. If we love him, we shall often converse with him in prayer, and holy meditation. We shall also converse of him, and extol him, as the fairest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely. Every where, we shall labour to spread the refreshing fragrance of his blessed name. He will be the subject of our songs, and we shall feel and say,

“No theme is like redeeming love,
No Saviour is like ours.”

Finally, if we love him, we shall exhibit his doctrines and precepts in our lives, for he hath said, “Ye are my friends, if you do whatsoever I command you,” and again, “If you love me keep my commandments.”

Dec. 6.

LOVE TO CHRIST.

PART II.—*John* xxi. 17.

IF we find that we do love Jesus, then it is desirable that we ascertain the degree and extent of our attachment to him. Love to Jesus should be *ardent*. It should not be a faint and feeble feeling, but as a holy flame burning with intense ardour on the altar of our souls. Love to Jesus should also be *supreme*. Other objects may and ought to be loved, but Christ should have the supremacy, the entire pre-eminence. He should have the throne of our most hallowed affections, and no rival should divide his sway, and we shall sing;

“Had we a thousand hearts to give,
Lord, they should all be thine.”

Love to Jesus should be *constant*. Constancy is that alone which gives worth to affection: without this, there can be no confidence or complacent delight. Jesus requires our love always, and on all occasions: not merely under seasons of prosperity and excitement, but in adversity, and in sickness; yea he requires *love* that will outlive death, and that many waters cannot quench. Finally, he expects our love to be *progressive*. We must grow in love — abound in love — walk in love; and rise into this holy atmosphere, until we are perfected in love, and

completely meet for that world, where all is one blessed, uninterrupted, and eternal scene of love.

“Thou, O love my portion art,
Lord thou know'st my earnest heart.
Other comforts I despise,
Love be all my paradise.”

Dec. 7.

LOVE TO CHRIST.

PART III.—*John xxi. 17.*

LOVE to Jesus is an affection the most reasonable, whether we reflect upon what he is, what he has done for us, is now doing, or what he has engaged to do. In *himself* all excellencies are combined. He possesses all the glorious attributes of Deity; but he is especially distinguished for those traits which render him pre-eminently attractive. Only consider the mildness of his disposition, his gentleness, meekness, goodness, benignity, compassion, and pity. He is the personification of grace, the essence and the fountain of love. Then reflect on what he *hath done* for us. He has loved us with an everlasting love—he set his heart upon us, before the mountains were settled, or years began to roll. Then in the fulness of time, he left Heaven and impoverished himself for our sakes, assumed our nature, became the slave of servants, was obedient

unto the whole law, lived for us, suffered for us, and last of all died for our sins, according to the scriptures. He loved us even unto death, and greater love can no man display, than this.

“ He left his starry crown,
And laid his robes aside,
On wings of love came down,
And wept, and bled, and died ;
What he endured, oh who can tell,
To save our souls from death and hell.”

Then consider what he is *now* doing for us.” Having died for us, he rose again, and in our nature, took possession of heaven on our behalf, and there he dwells to advocate the interests of his people ; and by his gifts, to enrich them with all grace, and to make them meet for those mansions of glory he hath prepared for them. And he has given them the most glorious promises, as it regards the future. He has engaged to preserve them safely unto death ; to conduct them through Jordan’s swelling stream, to Canaan’s blissful shore ; to give them a mansion of blessedness, and a crown of glory, that fadeth not away. He has engaged also, to raise their bodies in his own glorious likeness, and to glorify both body and soul, with his own glory for ever.

Dec. 8.

LOVE TO CHRIST.

PART IV.—*John xxi. 17.*

LOVE to Jesus will be connected with the most delightful results. It will associate us with the most endearing friendships. Then will angels behold us with complacency and delight, for they cheerfully minister to the heirs of salvation; and by love to Jesus, we come to a state of happy fellowship with them. But love to Jesus will secure to us the friendship of God. Hence the Saviour said, "If a man love me, my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (John xiv. 23.). And what is comparable to the love of God? To be loved of God, and to enjoy his friendship, is better than life. Then love to Jesus, will render us the subjects of many great and precious promises. There is the promise of grace, which implies all necessary good, to those who love Jesus in sincerity and in truth. It is also said, that "All things work together for their good." There is also a crown of life laid up for all that love him (Jas. i. 12.). Indeed, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into man's heart to conceive, what the Lord hath prepared for them that love him" (1 Cor. ii. 9.). On the other hand, there is that fearful passage, which is addressed to all those who are strangers to

this holy affection, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema, Maranatha;" that is, accursed when Christ shall come (I Cor. xvi. 22.). Love to Jesus can alone qualify us for the glory of heaven. Jesus is the only object of attraction in that blessed world. None can dwell there, and engage in the services of that temple, but those who can feel and join in that rapturous song, "Unto him who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, be glory and dominion for ever" (Rev. i. 5-6.).

"Give me thyself, from every boast,
From every wish set free;
Let all I am in thee be lost,
But give thyself to me."

"Thy gifts alas! cannot suffice,
Unless thyself be given;
Thy presence makes my paradise,
And where thou art is heaven."

Dec. 9.

CHRIST THE TREE OF LIFE.

The Tree of life.—Rev. xxii. 2.

THIS tree of life is none other than Jesus, the far famed plant of renown. He is often compared by the sacred writers to a tree, and he spake of

himself as being the true vine, and his Father as the husbandman. But he is emphatically the tree of life. There is no life which he has not communicated; he is the life both of earth and heaven. But he is so especially to the dying sinner. By reason of transgressing the Divine command, and eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, sin and death entered our world. Jesus as the tree of life, is the grand remedy, and only antidote. His leaves were for the healing of the nations, and his fruit is for the nourishment and delight of his people through all generations. Tasting of this tree they first begin to live, and by feeding upon it, life is supported and perpetuated. The fruit of the tree is abundant and various. It bears twelve sorts of fruit, or in other words, a perfection of sorts, which are suited to all the need of God's people. What totally annihilates all their wants, and fills them with all the good they can possibly need. Not only do we live by the fruit of this tree on earth, but it is also the food of glorified saints in heaven. Under its shady boughs, the inhabitants of the celestial paradise shall sit with great delight. Its fragrance shall fill the heavenly fields with the richest odours, the very air shall be impregnated with its perfumes, and be fraught with the balm of immortality and eternal life. Jesus the tree of life, is in the midst of the heavenly paradise, equally accessible on

every side, from every quarter, and to all its redeemed inhabitants.

“ In midst of Eden's sacred fields,
The tree of life its fragrance yields;
And spreads its laden boughs around.
Where fruit of every kind is found.”

Dec. 10.

CHRIST THE TREE OF LIFE.

PART II.— *Rev. xxii. 2.*

To this tree of life, we would invite a dying world, for there is no other remedy for the perishing children of men. At a distance from this, we must of necessity therefore, starve and die. The branches of this tree, happily extend to the whole world, and its fruit is offered to every creature. No flaming sword is wielded by the angry cherubim, to prevent any from having access. The way to it is free, and plain; the terms gratuitous, and the invitation is to all. Myriads of fainting souls have come and have been revived. All the diseases of the mind are thoroughly cured by its healing leaves. Its fragrant odours fill the mind with unspeakable joy and delight. By feeding upon it, we attain a spiritual nature, so as to be made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.

“ The tree of life that near the throne,
 In heaven’s high garden grows,
 Laden with grace, bends gently down,
 Its ever smiling boughs.”

“ Hovering amongst the leaves, there stands
 The sweet celestial dove ;
 And Jesus on the branches hangs,
 The banner of his love.”

“ ’Tis a blest heaven of strange delights,
 While in the shade we sit ;
 His fruit is pleasing to the sight,
 And to the taste as sweet.”

‘ New life it spreads thro’ dying hearts,
 And cheers each drooping mind ;
 Vigour and joy the juice imparts,
 And leaves no sting behind.”

“ Infinite grace our souls adore,
 Whose wond’rous hand has made
 This living tree of wond’rous power,
 To raise and heal the dead.”

Happy they who constantly dwell near this tree, and daily feed upon its fruits, and happy they who can catch one believing glance of it while passing through the valley of death, and still more happy all they who are raised to dwell beneath it, in the Eden above, for ever.

Dec. 11.

CHRIST THE FIRST FRUITS.

The first fruits of them that slept.—1 Cor. xv. 20.

THE resurrection of the body is a doctrine confined to the sacred volume of revelation. The

ancient philosophers who clearly believed in the existence of the soul after death, never imagined that the body would rise again. There are but few intimations of it in scriptures of the old testament. Job one of the early patriarchs expressed his full confidence in it, when he exclaimed, "Yet in my flesh shall I see God." Jesus clearly taught it, and often referred to the grand and solemn scene, when they that were in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God and live. It is a doctrine highly cheering to the devout mind. It is a matter therefore of great joy, that its certainty is fully established. God can raise the dead therefore it is not impossible. In nature we see a great many changes, which are analagous to it. See the beautiful morning bursting forth, from the sable blackness of night. Observe the new creation of spring, coming forth from the dreary and sterile scenes of winter. Observe, too, the changes which many of the inferior animals pass through, before they reach the perfection of their existence. And why shall we doubt as to the resurrection of the dead. Then God hath said it shall come to pass, and he is ever of one mind; he cannot change, and therefore it must be realized, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. But the grand immovable basis of our hope is this — Christ lived, and died, and rose again: and his resurrection is a pledge of ours; he is the first fruits of them that slept. As the Lord required the first fruits of the

harvest to be brought before him, and as this was the certain pledge of the full crop, so Jesus has arisen in our nature, arisen for our sakes, and so sure as the Lord liveth, his people shall live also. Yes, they shall participate in the benefits of his death, and know the power of his resurrection.

Dec. 12.

CHRIST THE FIRST FRUITS.

PART II.—1 *Cor.* xv. 20.

BUT the first fruits not only pledged the full harvest, but were of the same nature and quality of what followed. So believers shall not only be raised by Christ, but like unto him:—his resurrection is a type of theirs: they shall have a resurrection similar to that of Jesus. It shall be a *joyful* resurrection, as was that of the Redeemer. It shall be in the *morning* of the great day, and shall be connected with the *ministry* of angels. It shall be a resurrection to a deathless state. Jesus was dead, but is now alive for evermore. His people shall be raised to immortality and eternal life. Christ's resurrection was of his identical suffering body; but though it retained all its scars, yet it was raised in *glory*: it could move with the velocity of light, could be visible or invisible at his pleasure. Such will be the bodies of believers;—they will be ex-

actly conformed to the likeness of Christ's glorious body, according to the working by which he is able to subdue all things unto himself. (Phil. iii. 21.)

“Hear Immanuel's voice proclaim
I the resurrection am,
Mine the power that brings to sight
Immortality and light.

From the grave's ignoble trust,
He redeems our sleeping dust.
Pattern, in his glorious state,
Of the change his followers wait.

Soon the rolling years shall bring
Our returning God and King.
Soon the joyful morn shall rise
With new guests to deck the skies.”

In affliction, with the scenes of mortality before our eyes, or when mourning the loss of beloved friends in Christ, let this cheer us, Christ has risen from the dead, and is become the *first fruits* of them that slept.

Dec. 13.

CHRIST TYPIFIED BY THE GOLDEN POT OF MANNA.

The golden pot that had manna.—Heb. ix. 4.

IN order that the Israelites might not forget how God had fed them in the wilderness, it was appointed that a quantity of the manna, perhaps an

omer, should be laid up and preserved as a memorial to future generations. To this the apostle therefore refers, in describing the ark and its furniture in the holiest of all, "wherein," says he, "was the golden pot that had manna." In this Jesus was very beautifully typified and set forth, for he reminds us, that he is the true bread of life sent down from heaven. The history of the manna is given in *Exodus* xvi., from the 11th verse. Let us notice, then, some of the more interesting points of resemblance between the manna and Christ. The *name manna* signifies to prepare or appoint, doubtless referring to God preparing in the desert, a table for his people. Now Jesus is particularly described as the prepared, the chosen, and the appointed of the Father. The *source* of the manna, was heaven. God sent it from above. Jesus, too, came from heaven. He had dwelt from eternal ages in the bosom of the Father, and descended from thence, that he might be the bread of life to a dying world. The manna was *small* in appearance, as small as the hoar frost. Jesus appeared as a root out of a dry ground. He made himself of no reputation, but took on him the form of a servant, was born in poverty, a man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs. The *form* of the manna was round, denoting the perfection and eternity of Christ. The *colour* was white, thus exhibiting the purity of his nature, and the holiness of his life. The *taste* of manna was exceedingly sweet, like

wafers made of fine honey. How transcendently sweet and precious is every thing associated with the blessed Redeemer.—

“ All our capacious powers can wish,
In him most richly meet,
Nor to our eyes is light so dear
Or friendship half so sweet.”

Dec. 14.

THE GOLDEN POT OF MANNA.

PART II.— *Heb. ix. 4.*

LET us now consider the mode of its communication. The manna was *given* to the Israelites in the desert: they had no price wherewith to purchase it; they had no righteousness by which it could be merited: but God graciously compassionated them in their low estate, and freely sent it them from heaven. Jesus is God's gracious gift to the world. He *so* loved it, that he did not withhold his only Son. The manna was bestowed *plentifully*, it fell in rich abundance, so as to meet the wants of all the hundreds of thousands of Israel. Jesus is the bread of life to the whole world. In him is provision enough for Adam's universal race.—

“ Enough for each, enough for all,
Enough for evermore.”

The manna was given them constantly, and i

never failed them so long as they journeyed in the desert. Christ, in his precious benefits, is exhaustless. He is our souls' daily bread. We may feed upon him through the whole of life's pilgrimage. And then, when heart and flesh faileth, he will be the strength of our hearts, and our portion for ever.

“Jesus thou art the living bread,
By which our needy souls are fed;
In thee alone thy children find
Enough to fill the empty mind.

Without this bread I starve and die,
No other can my need supply,
But this will suit my wretched case,
Abroad, at home, in every place.

This precious food my heart revives,
What strength! what nourishment! it gives,
O let me evermore be fed
With this divine celestial bread.”

Dec. 15.

THE GOLDEN POT OF MANNA.

PART III.—*Heb. ix. 4.*

LET us now consider the way in which the manna was received and used. The *place* where it was to be obtained was “round about the camp.” So Jesus is to be found in the ordinances of his house. He dwells in the midst of his church, and his church is to exhibit him, and

hold him forth to a dying world. There, is his name recorded; there his word is read, and his gospel preached. The manna was to be gathered *daily*. So we must live by faith on the Son of God. Every day we must pray, "Lord, evermore give us this bread." For, without him, as the staff of our soul's life, we can do nothing. It was to be gathered *early*. Jesus and his salvation ought to be sought first, and principally, and all other things shall be added to us; and more especially as this is the "accepted time, and this the day of salvation." The manna might be gathered by *all*. There was no restriction, and no limitation. It was free to each, and to the whole. So Jesus is the Saviour of the world; and he came expressly to give his life for it, that through him the world might be saved. Let us now notice the manner in which the manna was to be *used*. It was to be ground in mills, and baked with fire, signifying that Jesus must needs suffer and die on our behalf, before we could have life and salvation in his name. Yes, he not only loved us, but also gave himself for us, and suffered, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. The manna was *eaten*. Manna around the camp, or even in their dwellings, could not sustain life. So Jesus must be personally known: we must feed upon his flesh, and drink his blood, or we cannot have spiritual life. And then we observe, finally, *all* the manna was to be *caten*. Kept, and it became putrid. We,

too, must receive a *whole* Saviour — Jesus, in all his offices, work, and benefits. He must be our prophet, priest, and king, our alpha and omega, our all and in all.

Dec. 16.

THE GOLDEN POT OF MANNA.

PART IV.—*Heb. ix. 4.*

THE portion of manna, to which the apostle refers, was to be placed in a golden pot, and to be laid in the ark, as a memorial of God's preserving mercy. This golden pot might typify the greatness and magnificence of Christ's divine nature. For while, as our Mediator, he was man in our nature, and with us, yet he was co-equal with the Father, the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person. Or perhaps the golden pot might be intended to exhibit to us the word and ordinances of the gospel. The word is more precious than gold, yea, than fine gold. And Jesus is the precious treasure laid up in it. He is the great subject of revelation: all its writers testify of him—his sufferings, and the glory that should follow. Or does it refer to Christ's presence in the holiest of all, in our nature, and dwelling there, that he may dispense in precious gifts, the bread of life to a dying world. For it

is worthy of notice that he is exalted there, that he may give repentance and remission of sins. When we think of Jesus, we lift our eyes towards the holy place — the place which he has taken possession of for the welfare of his people, and to which place he has engaged to exalt them when they die. And being there, the heavenly company of redeemed spirits may feed upon him, and enjoy his saving benefits for ever and ever. Have we been living by faith on Christ? Is Christ truly the bread of life to our souls? Do we hunger and thirst after him? Are we grateful for the invaluable provisions which God has prepared for us?

“Around the ancient camp

The copious manna fell —

Strew'd on the ground, a food they found;

But what, they could not tell.

But better bread by far

Is now to Christians giv'n —

Jesus the blessed tree of life,

The living bread from heav'n!”

Dec. 17.

JESUS ALL AND IN ALL.

But Christ is all and in all. — Col. iii. 11.

THERE is no possibility of the Christian estimating Christ too highly, or of having his heart too

completely set upon him. Were our most exalted powers to be constantly raised in contemplation of his person and excellencies, we should find that it is impossible to know the extent of his glories, and that his greatness is unsearchable. Jesus cannot be too often the subject of our thoughts, or the theme of our conversation. We shall only be as happy as he desires we should be, by constantly keeping the eye of our minds upon him, and looking to him as the Author, until he becomes the Finisher of our faith. Indeed, there is no event connected with the world, or with the church, which is not identified with Christ, so that in all things he is all in all. Our first illustration of this will be taken from the *Creation of the world*. It is quite clear from scriptural statement, that Christ is the Creator of all things. Hence the apostle remarks, "that God created all things by Jesus Christ" (Eph. iii. 9.) And also, that by him, "God made the worlds" (Heb. i. 2.). Then he particularizes, and states the subject more fully, when he says, "By him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible; whether they be thrones or dominions, principalities or powers" (Col. i. 16.). John also states in the beginning of his gospel, "that all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made, that was made" (John i. 3.). But not only did God create all things by Jesus, but also "all things were created for him" (Col. i. 17.), His glory

was the end of creation. Our world especially he formed to be the theatre of his marvellous acts, and the scene of the wonders of his grace. Hence it is said, that before the mountains were laid, or the hills settled, his delights were with the sons of men.

Dec. 18.

JESUS, ALL AND IN ALL.

PART II.—Col. iii. 11.

As Christ is all, and in all, in the creation of worlds, he also is so, in the *arrangements* of *Providence* in the *government* of all things. For, “by him all things consist.” (Col. i. 17.) “He upholdeth all things by the word of his power.” (Heb. i. 3.) He has all power, both in heaven and on earth, and all government is placed in his hands, for, “He is Lord of all.” He is the “Blessed and holy Potentate, King of kings, and Lord of lords.” Hence we are directed to look unto him as the great Being whose universal energy, sustains the universe, and whose omnific influence controuls all events. At his bidding, the seraph flies to execute all his pleasures, and in his hand is the life of every living thing. In his hands are the reins of universal authority, a sceptre which he sways over all worlds. O yes! it is a delightful thought to the christian,

that Jesus is the universal ruler of all nations, and that nothing can possible happen without his direct appointment or permission. That as he once silenced the roaring waves on the Galilean lake, so he now sitteth on high, doing according to his righteous will, among the armies of heaven, and the inhabitants of earth: that his way is in the whirlwind, and the storm, and in the clouds are the dust of his feet. The consideration of Christ's authoritative connection with all the events of Providence, will tend greatly to fortify our minds in times of trouble and sorrow, and to reconcile us to the crosses and afflictions of life. Whom would we choose but Jesus, to select our inheritance for us, and to direct our ways? If our Redeemer manages all our concerns, then will they be wisely and affectionately regulated. The dreary desert shall yield us all necessary supplies at his commands, and the storms of life shall be quiet at his bidding. Life and health, sickness and death, are at his disposal, all our affairs are in his hands, and we may be firmly persuaded, that whatsoever we commit to him, is committed to our faithful Creator.

Dec. 19.

JESUS, ALL AND IN ALL.

PART III.—*Col. iii. 11.*

JESUS is all, and in all, in the great work of redemption. Here he has given us a complete

manifestation of all his illustrious perfections. Here we have put forth the exceeding greatness of his power, and the 'unsearchable riches of his grace,—

“Here the whole Deity full orb'd
In dazzling rays of light,
Appears to save a ruined world,
From gloom of hellish night,”

Whatever view we take of redemption Jesus is manifestly “all and in all.” Consider redemption, as the illumination of a world of darkness; then Jesus is the great celestial sun, its day spring, and only source of light. Consider redemption, as the deliverance of the world from the curse, and from the power of the devil. Then it was so delivered by Jesus becoming a curse for us, and by his death and resurrection, bruising the head of Satan. Consider it as the provision for the renovation of a world sunk in pollution and defilement. And then the Redeemer from the opening of his own heart, has provided in his precious blood, the fountain for its guilt and uncleanness. Consider redemption, as the great and boundless provision of blessings, for an impoverished and wretched world. Then Jesus is the fountain of those blessings, all, all, flow from the infinite stores of his grace. By his poverty alone are we made rich: and all our gifts come by him, and all our wants are supplied by Christ Jesus. Consider redemption, in its deliverance of immortal souls from the wrath to come,

and that deliverance is his own work, he only can free from condemnation here, and from eternal death hereafter. Jesus is the only deliverer from the wrath to come.

Dec. 20.

JESUS, ALL AND IN ALL.

PART IV — *Col. iii. 11.*

THE whole superstructure of redemption rests on Christ. He is the foundation stone, as well as the head of the corner. It originated with him. It was effected through him. And it will be consummated by him. All the dispensations with which God has favored the world, have derived all their excellency and importance from him. In offering their rural sacrifices, the saints of the antediluvian world had respect to him, as the seed of the woman who should bruise the serpent's head. Abel's sacrifice could not have been accepted without this. Enoch's piety and fellowship with God, could only be effected through this. The patriarchs were all evidently influenced by the same subject. Abraham saw Christ's day and was glad. Jacob expired in peace, because he knew him to be his salvation. Moses pointed to him as the great prophet, of whom he was but a type. David consecrated his muse to the celebration of the glories of his person, and the blessings of his reign;

and to him gave all the prophets witness. So that Jesus is interwoven with all that relates to the history of redemption; and holy Simeon, who had been waiting for the consolation of Israel, no sooner had Jesus in his arms, than he exclaimed, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." And the benefits of redemption are only known and experienced, as Jesus is preached and believed in, by a guilty and dying world. In every thing then that relates to man's salvation, Jesus is "all and in all."

Dec. 21.

JESUS, ALL AND IN ALL.

PART V.—*Col. iii. 11.*

JESUS is all and in all, in every thing that relates to his Church. The Church is his purchased property. Bought with his inexpressibly precious blood. The church is his kingdom, established upon the basis of his truth and grace. In it he dwells, over it he reigns supreme, and through it all his glory is diffused. The church is his vineyard, chosen, and planted by his own hand. The church is his army, ransomed from the vassalage of Satan, enrolled under the standard of his cross, and led on towards triumph and glory by himself, the

great Captain of salvation. The church is his body, fashioned and fitly framed by his own power, and he is its head, the source of vitality, direction, and strength to all its members. The church is his bride, and he is the lovely and blessed bridegroom, whose second coming shall be the signal for the celebration of the nuptial services, between himself and his espoused Church. The Church is his flock for whom he laid down his life, and he is the good shepherd, feeding his sheep, and leading them into the green pastures of his ordinances, and then giving unto them eternal life. The consideration of Christ being all and in all to his church, ought to inspire the saints with joy and confidence. Who can raze Zion, founded by the Lord of Hosts? who can destroy her, when the Lord is both her glory and defence? Her external appearance may be changed, friends may forsake her, ministers may die, but this is her security, Jesus dwells in her perpetually, his eyes are upon it every moment, and his heart is there continually. In all that relates to its security, happiness, and prosperity, Jesus is "all and in all."

Blest Jesus! our almighty king,
While in our Zion thou dost dwell,
"Our faith shall sit secure, and sing
Defiance to the gates of hell."

Dec. 22.

JESUS, ALL AND IN ALL.

PART VI.-- Col. iii. 11.

JESUS is all and in all, in every thing that relates to the experience of his people. Personal religion in all its branches is closely and inseparably connected with Christ. This will apply to the *graces* of religion. Jesus is the object of faith, the Author of faith, and the Finisher of faith. Jesus is the object of hope, and the ground of hope, and is in the believer's heart the hope of glory. Jesus is the object of love, and the source of love; we love him because he first loved us. His love is shed abroad in our hearts. And in all that relates to duty and labour, his love constraineth us. So also Jesus is all and in all, in the privileges of religion. *Justification* is his act. For we are justified freely by his grace. *Sanctification* is his work. He sanctifies us by his spirit and truth, and through the efficacy of his blood. He is made unto us sanctification. *Adoption* is his act. For we have the privilege to become the sons of God, by receiving him, that is, by believing on his name. And we know our adoption, because we have the Spirit of Christ in our hearts. We have also a *peace* by Jesus Christ. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. He is our peace. We have *preservation* by Jesus Christ. He holds

his saints in the hollow of his hands, so that they cannot perish, neither can any pluck them from thence. We have a *safe and happy death* by Christ. His grace supports, his presence cheers, and his rod and staff they comfort us. In dying, if we behold him, we are enabled to obtain victory over the last enemy, and have thus an abundant entrance ministered into his kingdom and glory. Oh! how desirable to feel in the hour of death, that Jesus is all, and in all.

“Happy if with our latest breath,
We may but gasp his name,
And dying cry to all around,
Behold, Behold, the Lamb!”

Dec. 23.

JESUS, ALL, AND IN ALL

PART VII.—Col. iii. 11.

CHRIST is all and in all, in the *duties and ordinances* of religion. As it regards duties, he is our only legislator, we are directed always to hear him. He also imparts the *strength* by which all duties are performed, for without him we can do nothing. Duties will only be acceptable to God, as they are connected with faith in Christ's merits, for all our services must be acceptable through him. In all *ordinances*, Jesus is all and in all. He is the sum

of the *gospel*. To preach the gospel is to preach Christ. There can be no gospel but what is identified with his name, and person, and work — Christ crucified, as the Saviour of the world. In *baptism*, his example is our model, and his command our authority. Besides, in baptism, we visibly put on Christ, and become his public witnesses before men. In the *Lord's supper*, we have also his example, and express command. The elements too, are significant of his body and blood, and shew us wherewith we have been redeemed; and by eating and drinking of the bread and wine, we profess to be Christ's friends, have fellowship with him, and shew forth his death till he come. In prayer, Christ is our medium of access to God, and his merits our only plea for acceptance. In *praise*, we bless God chiefly for the unspeakable gift of his dear son, and for all other gifts, as coming to us alone through his efficient mediation. Thus, in that which relates to the practical part of the believer's life, and in all that is connected with the ordinances of religion, Jesus is eminently "all and in all."

Dec. 24.

JESUS ALL AND IN ALL.

PART VIII.—*Col.* iii. 11.

As Christ in all and in all, in creation, providence, redemption, in the church, in all the privi-

leges and blessings of the gospel, and in all duties and ordinances,—so he is “all and in all” as it respects all the *prospective glory and felicity* of the believer for ever. In sickness he is our consolation, in death our life, and in eternity our portion for ever. Our *entrance into glory*, rests entirely with him. They are his mansions; purchased and prepared by himself. He receives the spirits of departed saints, and awards the crown of glory that fadeth not away. He also will raise the *body* at the last day, and fashion it like unto his own glorious body, and render it capable of the effulgent glories of the heavenly state. Then he also will *confess*, and proclaim the *reward* of all his people at the last day. From his lips shall proceed the glorious welcome, and the ecstatic, “Well done,” “Come, ye blessed, and inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world”: then the *bliss* of the redeemed hosts through eternal ages, shall flow from him. He will be the river of pleasure and the tree of life to the heavenly family for ever. Because he is exalted, they shall be exalted, because he lives, they shall live also, and be for ever with the Lord. On the glories of the Lord, they shall gaze with unutterable delight. In the service of the Saviour, they shall be eternally employed. And the anthems of his redeeming love, they shall sing for ever and ever. Through eternity, Jesus will be to the heavenly world, “all and all.”

O, that with yonder sacred throng,
We at his feet may fall,
And join the everlasting song,
And crown him, Lord of all!"

Dec. 25.

CHRIST'S NATIVITY.

Unto us a child is born.—Isaiah, ix. 6.

ISAIAH, at least seven hundred years before the Redeemer's advent, uttered this delightful sentence, as though the event had already taken place. Christ's nativity had been long predicted,—the pious in Israel, had been intently waiting for its accomplishment. Generation after generation had passed away since the first intimation of it had been given. At length, the momentous crisis arrived,—the fulness of the times,—the period to which the purposes of God had referred, and now is realised the illustrious event; the long expected Messiah is born. Born in our nature, for he was truly a human child, made in all points like unto us, but without sin. Born at the time signified in Jacob's prophecy, when the sceptre was departing from Judah, and the law-given from between his feet. Born at the expiration of Daniel's weeks—Born in the place spoken of by Micah the prophet, in Bethlehem of Judea. Born of a virgin, as Isaiah had said, that "A virgin shall conceive and bring

forth a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel, "God with us." Born in circumstances of poverty and humiliation, his first residence being borrowed from the beasts,—“ Wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.” Born notwithstanding under circumstances of magnificence and glory, a choir of angels attesting the fact, and celebrating the event, in their anthems of joy. Born to be the world’s illustrious prophet, the great priest of the human family, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Born for us men, and for our eternal salvation. The name of the child born, is Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.

“ Celebrate Immanuel’s name,
The prince of life and peace !
God with us, our lips proclaim,
Our joyful hearts confess ;

God is in our flesh reveal’d,
Heaven and earth in Jesus join,
Mortal with immortal fill’d,
And human with divine.”

Dec. 26.

CHRIST’S WORK FINISHED.

I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.—

John xvii 4.

THIS forms a part of Christ’s sacerdotal prayer. Never was such a prayer presented to Jehovah,

from the foundation of the world. How sublime is the style which he adopts: how holy and fervent is the spirit it breathes throughout; and how comprehensive and eternally momentous the blessings for which he intercedes. He could say when addressing his heavenly Father, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." Not that every part of his undertaking was accomplished, for he had to perform the most arduous portion of it, in drinking the cup of the Divine displeasure, and enduring the painful and ignominious death of the cross. And after death, he had to spoil the king of terrors, and burst the gloomy barriers of the tomb. To heaven too, he was exalted, not to repose in inglorious ease, but to govern his spiritual empire and extend his reign to the ends of the earth. But he had finished all that active course which had been allotted him up to the period of his death. He could look back, and behold every engagement fulfilled, and every duty performed. He had given a full and perfect revelation of the way to eternal life: he had given the gospel to the world, and a perfect digest of rules for his church. He had fully proved his own Messiahship, by his astounding miracles, he had healed all sorts of diseases, he had expelled demons, he had forgiven sins, and raised the dead: and now he was ready to be offered up, and cease his labour and his life together

Dec. 27.

CHRIST'S WORK FINISHED

PART II.—*John xvii 4.*

THREE things deserve our attention and imitation in reference to the work of Christ. He entered upon it *cheerfully*, his holy ardent soul longed to commence that blessed work on which his heart had been set from eternal ages, so that he went ninety miles that he might be baptized, and anointed for his great undertaking. Then he was also faithful in doing *all* the work assigned him. He did not neglect his father's command in a single instance: he was a faithful high priest, over all things in the house of God, he ever did the things pleasing before him, and was his constant joy and delight, in whom he was ever well pleased. Then he was constant even unto death: he never wearied, all the contempt and sufferings he endured, never damped his ardour, nor quenched his zeal. He scarcely regarded the demands of nature,

“Cold mountains and the midnight air,
Witness'd the fervour of his prayer!

Hence in watching, and prayer, and teaching, and healing, and blessing men, he was always engaged, and when objects of misery did not come to him, “he went about doing good.” Thus he blessed men, and glorified his Father, until the solemn hour arrived, when he should lay down his life for the sal-

vation of the world. Have we imitated Jesus in cheerfully, faithfully, and constantly doing our master's blessed will. Have we so laboured, that we shall be fully ready, whatever hour the Son of Man cometh.

“ O, that each in that day,
Of his coming may say,
‘ I have fought my way through ;
I have finished the work, thou did'st give me to do’.”

Dec. 28.

CHRIST OUR JUDGE.

Judge of quick and dead.—Acts x. 42.

JESUS is the Creator of all things, and he upholdeth all things by the word of his power. All the arrangements of mercy in redemption are left to his management and control; so that he is “Lord of all.” In like manner, the final judgment of men and angels devolves upon him. He will occupy the great and final tribunal, and will decide the destiny of the countless myriads of accountable beings who shall stand before him. As the Judge of the human race, he is admirably qualified for the execution of the dread and momentous undertaking. He will sit upon the throne of his glory in the nature of those who stand before him. He will appear in the character of a brother, to every child of Adam's posterity. He will thus

be able to enter minutely into all the particular feelings of each case: he will be able to sympathise with human weakness: he will know what allowance to make for the influence of an ungodly world, and for the fearful attacks of the Prince of Darkness: he will know also the capabilities and talents each has possessed, and be able to decide upon the precise return each individual should make to him. Being in our nature, he will be disposed to exercise his compassion and pity to the very utmost bounds, consistently with the purity of his nature and the rectitude of his laws. How cheering is the consideration that Jesus will be Judge—he who hath redeemed us, and has so greatly exhibited his love to our fallen race. Yet this will greatly aggravate the condemnation of unbelievers at that day. For then their condemnation will not so much arise from violating the principles of justice, as trampling under foot the brightest displays and offers of grace. Such will be condemned for rejecting the love of God, and refusing salvation obtained by the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb slain. And that lamb will then be upon the throne. And the wrath of that lamb (and who can tell what it comprehends?) will be the portion of the cup of unbelievers for ever and ever.

Dec. 29.

CHRIST OUR JUDGE.

PART II.—*Acts* x. 42.

As the final judge of quick and dead, Jesus will display absolute integrity and righteousness. He will judge the world in "righteousness." He is styled the "righteous judge." None shall receive injustice at his hands. All then shall receive impartially, according to the works done in the body, whether good or bad. No appearance of wretchedness and anguish will move Jesus then, and no amount of bribe will prevent the administration of justice to all. His omniscience will render his decisions infallibly right, His eyes will pierce through every breast. At one glance he will discern the state of every heart. Hypocrisy will be utterly in vain. Every man will appear in his true character, amid the light which shall be thrown upon him, from the refulgent brightness of the countenance of the Judge. Then his almighty power will enable him to execute a righteous sentence upon every one who appears before him. At the expression of his displeasure, the wicked will suddenly depart into everlasting punishments. And at his command the righteous will be elevated to glory, honour, immortality, and eternal life. O, let us not forget that, the lips of Jesus are to pronounce the doom of every man.

Once he appeared exerting his wisdom, power and goodness, in the creation of our world, and in forming man for his own glory. After the apostacy, he appeared as the Redeemer, and by his suffering, and death, hath placed man within the reach of mercy. But at his second advent, he will appear, neither as the Creator, nor Redeemer, but as the Judge, and will examine the affairs, and decide the destiny of this world of ours for ever.

Dec. 30.

CHRIST OUR JUDGE.

PART III.—*Acts* x. 42.

ANTICIPATE the arrival of that day, that great day of the Lord, the day for which all other days were made, and with which they are so solemnly connected. The signs predicted by the prophets, are now manifested. Now is the great white throne erected. Christ attended with thousands of thousands of angels, takes his seat upon it. The trumpet is sounded, and the loud shrill blast, echoes the length, and breadth of the world itself. Every inhabitant is awakened: every grave and tomb, is opened. Behold the universal movement of bone to his bone, until at last, there comes forth, the universal family of man. Not an individual is wanting. From Adam, to the last born of our race, all, all are present, and stand before the judge of quick

and dead. That Judge is Jesus—the despised Galilean; the reputed impostor of Nazareth. But how altered his mien; how different his appearance — no longer arrayed in the garbs of poverty, no longer the man of sorrows, the companion of publicans and sinners; no longer wearing the mock apparel, the thorny crown, the tantalizing reed. His face shines, as the sun at noon-day: on his head are many crowns, myriads of angels, minister unto him, the heavenly hosts worship before him: the unnumbered crowds of human beings stand in his presence. He opens the books, the believing, whose names are recorded in the book of life, are justified, confessed, and glorified before an assembled world. The wicked and the fearful, and the unbelieving, quake and tremble, before him. They cry to the rocks to fall upon them. But they cry in vain; the rod of judgment is stretched forth, and the attendant officers, bind them hand and foot, and they are cast into outer darkness, where there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.

Dec. 31.

CHRIST, THE OMEGA.

—And Omega.—Rev. i. 8.

JESUS is styled the beginning of the creation of God, and here he says “I am Alpha,” that is the be-

ginning, and “Omega,” that is the ending. The world was not only made by him, but for him, so that all things were created for his pleasure and glory. All things were purposed and overruled to subserve his own glory. So also, he is the Omega of redemption. While he contemplated the salvation of a perishing race, so he also, designed along with it, to exhibit all his glorious perfections, and to magnify that law which was a perfect transcript of his own mind. Hence in redemption we have the greatest, and most clear revelation of the character and attributes of God.—

“The highest seraph never saw
So much of God before.”

And he is the Omega of all the institutions connected with his church on earth. Prayer shall be made for him continually, and daily shall he be praised. His name shall endure as long as the sun, all nations shall be blessed in him, and call him blessed, of his reign and dominion, there shall be no end. And he will be the Omega of all the glories and services of the heavenly world. When his triumphs are completed on earth, he will be seated on his celestial throne—around which there will be the rainbow, in appearance like unto an emerald. To him shall endless praise be paid, by the worshipping hosts of heaven; and they shall sing the wonders of his grace for ever. Dear reader, have you by perusing these short exercises, re-

ceived an increase of knowledge, concerning the person, offices, work, and glory of the Redeemer? Does his person appear more lovely, his offices more dignified, his work more important, and his glory more illustrious? Do you believe in him more firmly, love him more fervently, and obey him with more alacrity and delight? Are you more prepared to deny yourself, and to bear the cross more cheerfully for his sake? Is communion with him more sweet, and are you less attached to earth, and more ready to die, that you may be with Jesus, which is far better? If these happy effects have been produced then the end of writing these exercises, is fully answered, and to Jesus, who is the Omega of all things, let all the glory be ascribed, both now and evermore. Amen.

To Christ, the lamb upon the throne,
Be endless praises given ;
By all the saints on earth beneath,
And all the hosts of heaven.

FINIS.

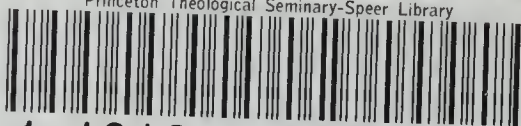


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